

THE LARGEST WRITER'S MAGAZINE

# Writer's Digest

## Editors Abroad

The first official news of editors now in the  
OWI and armed service

## Sophisticated Romances

By FLORENCE STONEBRAKER  
How to write and sell the circulating library  
romantic novel

## Got Any Tomatoes?

By AUGUST LENNIGER  
The full story of one man's sale to the Post

## Tomorrow Is Too Late

By ROBERT NORMAN HUBNER  
A newspaperman finally gets a novel completed

## Bye, Bye Ballistics

By JULIUS LONG  
A rebel from The School of Burnt Cordite Sniffers

The Writer's Market  
The Forum

An Idea A Day  
New York Market

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS



# UZZELL ULTIMATELY

*Why  
not  
now?*



*Veal For Victory!*

I **R**UNNING through letters every day from new writing friends I am continually surprised to learn the reasons why they have not let me hear from them sooner. They were afraid I might not be interested in a mere beginner, that I worked only with noted scribes. Some of them—you'd be surprised to learn how many—"took a chance" first with a "critic" who seemed to charge no fees or a literary agent whose offer to sell manuscripts seemed quite dazzling.

Let me announce here: the beginner more than any other needs sound coaching and he is my specialty, always has been. "Noted scribes" I turn over to established agents in New York where they belong. As for the agents who feature sales: most of these sales are the work of seasoned professionals who need no help and whose work anyone could sell. Most agents employ all their time with the business management of their "name" clients and have little or no time for the troubles of the beginner. The unrarried writer is my man.

I handle no work on a commission basis. When my writer develops, I turn him over to an agent. If he isn't quite good enough but produces an entertaining story, I submit it myself through my representative in New York; this service is covered by the fee he pays me.

My fees for criticism and collaborative help are very low. For a manuscript, fact or fiction, up to 5,000 words, \$3 for an Editorial Appraisal (salable or not and why) and \$5 for a Full Collaborative Criticism (constructive help, replotting, and blue penciling if it helps). Most writers I have trained who are now in the whole range of magazines, on the air and in the bookstores began by submitting their work to me and for these fees. Information important to writers is contained in a free pamphlet, "You And Your Manuscript." Ask any questions you wish. I'll answer personally and promptly.

## THOMAS H. UZZELL

818 MONROE STREET

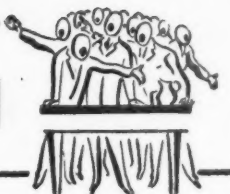
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA







## FORUM

**Shake the Ladies**

Sir:

Say, can't we shake the pulp *love* ladies out of the doldrums they've gotten themselves into since the advent of the war.

About nine-tenths of the allegedly timely love stories that has passed my desk this last six months are about as out of key with the mood and spirit of the present times as any stories could possibly be. But the dear sweet ladies who write for the love magazines have shown absolutely no intentions of learning what in hell is going on around them. They dish out the same old pap as before, the sob-sistery gush that so disgusted that attractive Soviet woman sniper, whatever her name was, when the gal reporters turned loose on her.

They merely hang a uniform on the hero or the gal, grind out the same old ruthlessly irrelevant plots and let it go at that. Get this: (I get it so much lately)—The element of timeliness is supposedly introduced by hero who is busily putting a defense plant into production before joining the colors. And that is your up-to-minute love story.

This country is going to war, whether it knows it or not. Many men will die. This will produce a complete overturn in the reverie of the kids—whatever their ages are—who read these magazines, and even these readers are going to change. I'm convinced it's the writers who are ducking the issue. They just can't get into their skulls that *today* is not *yesterday*. Every single person's life is affected by this total war—and the will to win, and how we are going about winning it, is the story of the hour.

If writers are incapable of any sort of realistic thinking—which doesn't mean romance goes out of the window, because love under fire or war pressure is romance at its highest peak—haven't we the right to be on the lookout for some who are more in step with the times? And that's the why of this letter to you. Gollies, if they aren't touched by this grim struggle all around them— isn't there a Dorothy Ducas [OWI Magazine chief] in Washington to help them if they'll write to her for the dope to make their yarns the kind that *must* be written today.

LEO MAROULIES, *Editorial Director,*  
Standard Magazines,  
N. Y. C.

For news of O. W. I.'s essay at pulp paper plotting see next page—Ed.

# Listen Friends!

**You do the writing. Let me do the worrying.**

Editors are clamoring for material. The buying market is red hot . . . but you're not satisfying the demand.

Perhaps you're pressing, trying too hard, perhaps you're stale. Relax. Let yourself slide into the groove. Write in that free, natural style of yours.

Don't worry about editing or marketing or sales. That may be what's tightening you up. Worrying is my job. Writing is yours.

Relax! Take a deep breath, and let's go to town on the typewriter. I'll take care of the output . . . in the "checky" way that counts.

## F E E S

\$1 to 1,000 words	\$7 from 15,000 to 25,000 words
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### What makes WRITING ability GROW?

For a number of years, the Newspaper Institute of America has been giving free Writing Aptitude Tests to men and women with literary ambitions.

Sometimes it seems half the people in America who are fired with the desire to write have taken advantage of this offer to measure their ability.

#### What the tests show

Up to date, no one who could be called a "born writer" has filled out our Writing Aptitude Test. We have not yet discovered a single individual miraculously endowed by nature with all the qualities that go to make up a successful author.

One aspirant has interesting ideas—and a dull, uninteresting style. Another has great creative imagination, but is woefully weak on structure and technique. A third has a natural writing knack—yet lacks judgment and knowledge of human behavior. In each case, success can come only after the missing links have been forged in.

Here, then, is the principal reason why so many promising writers fail to go ahead. Their talent is one-sided—incomplete. It needs rounding out.

#### Learn to write by writing

NEWSPAPER Institute training is based on journalism—continuous writing—the sort of training that turns out more successful writers than any other experience. Many of the authors of today's best sellers are newspaper-trained men and women. One advantage of our New York Copy Desk Method is that it starts you writing and keeps you writing in your own home, on your own time. Week by week, you receive actual assignments just as if you were right at work on a great metropolitan daily.

All your writing is individually corrected and criticized by veteran writers with years of experience "breaking in" new authors. They will point out those faults of style, structure or viewpoint that keep you from progressing. At the same time, they will give you constructive suggestions for building up and developing your natural aptitudes.

In fact, so stimulating is this association that student members often begin to sell their work before they finish the course. We do not mean to insinuate that they sky-rocket into the "big-money," or become prominent overnight. Most headlines are made with earnings of \$25, \$50, \$100, or more, for material that takes little time to write—stories, articles on business, fairs, travels, sports, recipes, civilian defense, war activities, etc.—things that can easily be turned out in leisure hours, and often on the impulse of the moment.

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### Oops, Elmer

SIR:

The O W I seems to be infringing on your field of late. As long as that Office confines itself to telling us what the Government would like us to write, all very well, but you have doubtless seen the recent bulletin offering a sample plot for a patriotic Love Pulp story.

Now that is the field in which I have won a modest but growing measure of success, and this plot moves me, patriotic as I am, (I have a son in the Army Air Corps,) to Heil, Heil, right in der Elmer's face. For those of you who have not seen the bulletin it begins with a heroine who fears that she will not be approved by the socialite mother of the man she loves. In the course of her war work she sees a nice old lady who is unfamiliar with the task in hand, and helps her. Through the days which follow, making up the story, girl and woman grow to love each other dearly, though strangely enough they do not learn each other's names. On the last page the hero comes in and introduces the old lady as his mother, to the surprise of everyone who has never read a story.

For the benefit of those of your readers who have never tackled the Love Pulps, let me say that the hero should be on stage the major part of the time—some authorities say at least seventy percent of the wordage. In my callow days I wrote one of those yarns where the heroine does all the work and the hero comes in on page eighteen to be accepted. It was a lovely story. I sent it to Mary Ann Thomas, the Love Story Lady of the Ryerson agency, to be marketed, and waited impatiently for a check. Instead, I got about three hundred well chosen words—the Love Story Lady doesn't pull her punches when your work is putrid—which may be summarized, "All you've done is lose the hero. Or didn't anybody ever tell you he's important."

My sympathy to the kindly and hard working gals who edit the Love Pulps. Every amateur in the land is going to write that plot and think it is going to sell, for didn't the Government suggest it.

There is this comfort in the situation. If Elmer Davis doesn't know anything about writing fiction, maybe we may still get some facts in his news releases.

Thanking you for much good advice in your pages—would that Elmer had read them.

CLARE WALTERS.

Box 224, Northport, N. Y.

#### WAR MAKES WRITERS

Every war has launched or marked the turning point in the careers of innumerable great authors, such as Laurence Stallings, Willa Cather, Ernest Hemingway, Edna Ferber, Irvin S. Cobb, Fannie Hurst. This war may be YOUR golden opportunity to express YOURSELF. Send TODAY for your N. I. A. Writing Aptitude Test. Special terms and privileges for U. S. Service Men.

Sir:

At its weekly meeting on Wednesday the Writers' War Board unanimously approved this statement:

We severely condemn Theodore Dreiser for saying, the other day in Canada, that he would rather see the Germans in control of England than the "aristocratic horse-riding snobs of the existing regime."

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It was not aristocratic snobs who rescued the British Army at Dunkerque, or who, greatly outnumbered, blasted the Luftwaffe from the English skies in 1940, or who stopped Rommel in his tracks last month. The people of the British Commonwealth are fighting this war as our brave and faithful allies, as are the Russian people and the Chinese people.

Not being lawyers, we do not know whether Theodore Dreiser's utterance was treasonable in the legal sense, but certainly our enemies would pay him well for his disservice to our country's cause. We profoundly regret that an American writer of Mr. Dreiser's eminence should thus insult and offend our allies and commit so shameful an act of sabotage against our government and people.

WRITERS' WAR BOARD,  
122 East 42nd Street,  
New York, N. Y.

Glad to learn the nit-wit Red crowd (anything that weakens a capitalistic country is good) didn't make the grade with the WWW.—Ed.

#### New Comic

Sir:

You may want to list a new publication of ours called *Funny Book Magazine* for Young Folks.

The magazine publishes comics, stories, puzzles and games. It is a 64 page monthly and is published for the four to seven year old group. We can use any juvenile stories concerning either children, grownups, or animals. Comic verse, diagrams and puzzles are also acceptable. Publisher George J. Hecht.

ELLIOTT A. CAPLIN, *Editor*,  
Parents Magazine Press  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

#### New Air Book

Sir:

We believe that you may be interested in the following information concerning *Flying Cadet*, a new aviation magazine for young men.

*Flying Cadet* is a monthly magazine. The first issue will appear on the newsstands in about ten days.

In the masthead of the first issue is the following explanation which outlines the purpose of the magazine and its editorial keynote: *Flying Cadet* is published to give young men, between the ages of 15 and 19, accurate and clarified information that will be helpful to them in preparing themselves for aviation careers. Preliminary instructions in aerodynamics, navigation, meteorology, aircraft structure and power plant design will be accompanied by interpretive photographs, drawings, diagrams and blueprints. Articles of practical instruction will be alternated with inspirational stories, carefully selected fiction, biographies of aviation leaders and true accounts of heroism from the war fronts."

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ARCHER A. ST. JOHN, *Publisher*,  
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We want articles on finishing of aircraft, articles on plywood, making ammunition boxes, building truck bodies, methods of laying out the factories to the greatest efficiency, in fact, anything of this kind that would be useful to the furniture trade. We are also interested in articles on furniture manufacture, and new methods and substitutions for former materials no longer available.

I wonder if you could tell us where we can address such writers as, Paul Christian, Henry Novak, Red Sparks, F. A. Westbrook, B. H. Lawson, Gerald Albert Stedman, C. A. Lankau, Ben Popper, S. P. Wilson, Carl M. Schaaf, S. L. Booth, F. S. Benditt, Arthur Roberts and George Herrick, who write for such magazines as, *Woodworker*, *Veneers and Plywood*, *Modern Machine Shop* and *Industrial Finishing*?

*Furniture Manufacturer* pays up to one cent a word upon publication, and from one dollar to two dollars for photographs. We like to have photographs to accompany articles whenever possible. We also pay for diagrams and charts.

If you can give us the addresses of any of these people or put us in touch with any other writers who can handle these subjects, we will appreciate it very much.

EVELYN WOODBURY, *Associate Editor*,  
*Furniture Manufacturer*,  
342 Madison Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

## New York "Times Book Review" HERE WE COME!

Sir:

Mr. Albert Hubbell left *The Chicago Sun* some eight weeks ago; and since his departure I have been Literary Editor. "Book Week" is a product of *The Chicago Sun*.

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work we want, but may have occasional room for an extremely interesting and unusual short article (500 to 800 words) relating to the world of books and writers and readers in the Midwest.

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A. C. SPECTORSKY, *Literary Editor,*  
*Book Week, The Chicago Sun,*  
 400 West Madison Street,  
 Chicago, Illinois.

Sir:

The *Young Catholic Messenger* is a weekly publication for use in the junior grades of Catholic schools. It is used primarily in the teaching of current history and in citizenship training, but it also is used to supplement the other subjects of the curriculum, such as religion, English, civics, history, geography, and nature study. The three news review pages are staff-written. On the other pages of the *Young Catholic Messenger* we use:

1. *Short Stories.* One short story is used each week. The story should be between 1200 and 2000 words in length and should contain a strong plot. All kinds of stories are desired: mystery, adventure, humor, school life, etc. The stories are read in the classroom and should contain nothing in violation of the best moral and educational principles. There is no reason why this fact should detract in any way from the strength of the plot.

2. *Serial stories.* One chapter of a serial story is used each week. The number of chapters in a serial may vary from two to ten. The chapters should not exceed 1000 words in length. There should be a strong plot with a definite climax. Suspense, if possible, should conclude each chapter.

We are in the market for a limited number of "fillers" or short articles of 250 words or less.

3. *Plays.* We are in the market for a limited number of plays not exceeding 1500 words in length. The plays should be suitable for classroom presentation.

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The Young Catholic Messenger is a companion publication to Junior Catholic Messenger (third, fourth, and fifth grades) and Our Little Messenger (second grade). Material submitted to these publications should be addressed to them and should not be placed in the same envelope with Young Catholic Messenger manuscripts.

Self addressed, stamped envelopes should be enclosed with all manuscripts.

Sample copies will be sent on request. There is no charge for these copies.

DON SHARKEY,

Young Catholic Messenger,

124 E. 3rd, Dayton, Ohio.

## Argosy

Sir:

What with the Argosy inventory we inherited and the rush of new stuff that's been coming in, I've been somewhat snowed under these past few weeks, which accounts for the delay in answering yours of the twelfth.

We are eliminating the fact articles and plan to make Argosy a general fiction magazine. We'll cover modern war, historic adventure, fantasy, modern adventure, sports and mystery. We'll use stories with or without woman interest, and about the only "must" that would in any way differentiate Argosy from the average all-fiction magazine is the fact that we're going to demand a certain amount of adventure flavor in all stories. We'll use slick rejects if they meet our requirements, but too many of these lack the sense of urgency and importance which I think is so vital in a magazine such as Argosy.

We're particularly interested, at the present time, in soundly plotted, aptly written, authoritative stories of out-of-the-way adventure spots, either dealing directly with the war or using the war as an influencing background, and can use a few good historic adventure yarns particularly in the short and short novelette lengths.

ROGERS TERRILL, Associate Publisher,

Popular Publications,

205 East 42nd Street,

New York.

● For those who came in late, Argosy magazine, a high-class pulp monthly, published for 60 years by Frank A. Munsey, and recently degraded by wretched editing, was bought by Harry Steeger, who, with Rogers Terrill, is again making Argosy the fine old book it was.—Ed.

## A Letter From Our Publisher

Dear Gang:

I have only time for a short note in which I will try to cover training at Fort Sill.

I have gone to many different schools all my life, but this is by far the best and most efficient. My weekly schedule runs like the Pennsylvania Railroad, and if I am late I miss something.

I get up at 6:00 A. M., make my bed, clean and mop under my bunk and fall out for break-

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fast. We march to the mess hall and must be ready to begin classes at 7:30. From this time until 6:00 P. M., we are in classes studying tactics, map data, procedure. We finish chow at 6:45 P. M. and are allowed to do what we want until 7:20. Then we must either remain in the hut or go to Study Hall. At 11:00 P. M., I hit the bunk and do the same thing over again each day.

The inspections are rougher than the school work. Both your mother and mine are pikers compared to the inspections given by the inspecting officers.

Last week we went out on the range to fire some problems. Each student acts as a Battery Commander and gives the orders to open fire. Thursday we acted as forward observers. The guns were 2000 yards behind us and fired the shots over our heads. From our position we directed the fire.

Yesterday we had an anti-tank demonstration. A Colonel showed us how we could protect ourselves against tanks. The tanks were moved on cables and were fired on by 37mm, 75mm, 105mm, 155mm and 50mm caliber machines. Tanks are easy to knock out—the only advantage of tanks is the fear that they cause when advancing towards you. I'll be ready for them when they come.

After being at this school I am convinced that our artillery is superior to the enemy. Also that we have good officers to command them. At this school no one gets their bars unless they can produce.

Our tactical officers try to be as rough as possible and attempt to discourage us. But the fellows that have the guts just take it and keep plugging. In other words, we won't have any weak-kneed officers from this school.

The bloody fourth of Gunnery is coming up next week. I have five exams and the same number of observed fire problems on the range. The fellows are dropping out like flies, but I intend to keep plugging along.

Give my regards to all.

Sincerely,

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# WRITER'S DIGEST

Vol. XXIII

The Leading and Largest Writer's Magazine

December, 1942

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EDWARD J. RYAN, D.D.S., *Editor*,  
*Oral Hygiene*,  
708 Church Street,  
Evanston, Illinois.

**Editors for free**

SIR:

For your record, my short short, "Fancy Free," which fetched 18th prize (I think) in the last *DIGEST* short short tug-of-war, recently sold to *This Week* (my fifth sale there) under the new title of "Temporary Sanity," for four hundred sweet little dollars.

Incidentally, the very Royal portable I'm patting on now was spoils from a *DIGEST* contest about four years ago.

Next year I wish you'd give away editors, and let me win one.

NANCY MOORE  
"The Farm"  
Charlottesville, Virginia.

• State age, disposition, and submit front, side and rear photo.—Eds.

**First**

SIR:

I am enclosing money for a three-month subscription for my brother who is a Paratrooper.

The first time he ever wrote he sold. It is in the November issue of *SIR Magazine*. The manuscript was written in long hand and single spaced. He received \$40.00 for his article, and I'm very proud of him.

He may soon sail overseas and therefore I am in doubt as to whether he would want a longer subscription. I'll leave that up to him.

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# MERRY XMAS!



A few of my clients' November Magazine Appearances

And it will be—for C. P. Donnel, Jr., Martha Shakespeare, William Rough, G. T. Fleming-Roberts, and many other Lenniger clients.

C. P. Donnel, Jr. had sold three stories to one pulp when he contacted me; in two years we put him into most of the top pulps as well as into such slicks as *Country Gentleman*, *Farm Journal*, and *Liberty*. This Christmas he'll be celebrating his first sale to *Collier's*. Martha Shakespeare, a beginner I launched with the love pulps a couple of years ago, has just hit the smoothpaper *Everywoman's*—and with a *serial*. Later, it will be brought out as her third book, by *Doubleday, Doran*. William Rough, who has been appearing only in the pulps, has just become a "dime a word" *Liberty* author. And by no means least, G. T. Fleming-Roberts is now in the movies with a detective novelet we've just sold to *Warner Brothers Pictures*.

Other *first sales* by my clients to such magazines as *Saturday Evening Post*, *Woman's Day*, *Boy's Life*, *Toronto Star Weekly*, etc. appear in the gift box above. Presents to writers, which you can have all through the year by employing my help. I have specialized in selling stories—and writers—for 20 years.

If you have sold \$1,000.00 worth of magazine copy during 1942, my help costs you nothing except the regular commission of 10% on American, 15% on Canadian, 20% on foreign sales. If you have sold \$500.00 worth in 1942, I'll work with you at one-half reading rates to beginners.

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# WRITER'S DIGEST

*The Leading and Largest Writer's Magazine*

RICHARD K. ABBOTT, *Editor*

A. M. MATHIEU, *Business Manager*

V. SLAUGHTER, MINNA BARDON, *Managing Editors*

## Editors Abroad

Uncle Sam Bugled and Editors and Writers  
By the Thousands Grabbed a Gun

By A. M. MATHIEU

A SILENT, uneasy revolution is taking place in every editorial office in the land as two great depleting forces take their toll. The Draft and the Office of War Information have reached into publication offices and lifted out 20 per cent of the brains of the business. Who are the editors who have gone, and what effect is this loss upon free-lance writers? Here is the first official news of what War has done to the copy desk.

The Quality Magazines have lost the fewest men, their staff being largely an older crowd. *Harper's Magazine*, *The American Mercury*, and *The Atlantic Monthly* suffered no loss at all; although Chester Kerr of *The Atlantic Monthly* left that firm to assume charge of the Book Division of the Office of War Information. *The Saturday Review of Literature* dropped Courtland Canby, Arthur Bodenheimer and George Dilkes.

In the major slicks, where, in recent years, youth has been put at a premium, the toll is larger. The *Post* has two editors in the Service, Richard Thruelsen and Alan Jackson, and The Curtis Publishing Company as a whole "has sent four hundred and

forty-six men into the Armed Forces," reports Editor E. Brandt.

*Reader's Digest* writes:

The following is a list of members of our editorial staff now in the armed forces:

John T. Beaudouin  
Harry H. Harper  
Thomas Heggen  
Walter B. Mahony  
Maurice T. Ragsdale  
Pamela Simpson

Miss Simpson has joined the WAFS in England. All the above were our associate editors.

Sumner Blossom, editor of *The American*, advises: "I am listing below the names of our editors now in the armed services, and their positions while on our staff:

Commander Albert Benjamin, U. S. N. R.  
(formerly *Fiction Editor*).

Second Lieut. Horace Kelland, U. S. A.  
(*Assistant Fiction Editor*).

Jack Long, Signal Corps Reserve (*Asst. Copy Editor*).

Burton Youngman, Ensign, U. S. N. R.  
(*Asst. Fiction Editor*)."

At *Collier's*, among the higher-ups of the editorial staff, only Kenneth Littauer, their popular, able fiction editor, is gone.

The *New Yorker* tells us: "Our staff members are not sharply identified as 'editors' or 'writers.' A score of men identified with the magazine have left."

An idea of what the Office of War Information can do to one staff comes from Harlan Logan, editor of *Look*, who advises us of these men gone into the Service:

Managing Editor John Hackett, now in Office of War Information.

Associate Editor James Miller, Navy officer.

Associate Editor S. M. Bessie, now in Office of War Information.

Associate Editor John Tompkins, now in Office of War Information.

In the picture magazine field, where *Life* is largest, so were its losses. T. K. Krug of *Life* reports these men in the services:

Associate Editor Edward K. Thompson.

Editorial Associates Julian Bach, Jr., Maitland Edey, Oliver Jensen, Tom Priedeaux.

Editorial Assistants George Caturani, Richard Pollard.

*Macfadden Publications* lost its general supervising editor, Ernest V. Heyn, and Joseph Corona, associate editor of its two fact detective books.

*Cosmopolitan*, like *Collier's*, dropped one man, Don Moore, who is now a Captain with the Signal Corps. *Mademoiselle*, the magazine that makes Horatio Alger look like a piker, sent off these editors:

Major Franklin S. Forsberg, General Manager.

Private Franz Taussig, Assistant Art Director.

Mildred Van Aken, WAAC, Fashion Ed.

Ralph Daigh of *Fawcett's* reports these men gone:

Major Robert Hertzberg, formerly editor of *Mechanix Illustrated*.

Lieut. William L. Parker, formerly editor of *Fawcett Comic Group*.

Cpl. Clifford Taylor, formerly associate editor of *True Magazine*.

Pvt. George Sentman, formerly associate editor of *Country Press Detective Group*.

Pvt. France Herron, formerly editor of *Fawcett Comic Group*.

In the pulps, A. A. Wyn's big stable fared the best editorially, losing not a single editor. *Street and Smith* lost these editorial associates: Henry B. Brown of *Pic*, Morris Jones and Garratt Edsall of *The Shadow*, and Carl Happel of *Air Trails*. At *Popular*, where the string is longer, the list was longer:

Loring Dowst, editor of *Spider and Detective Tales*.

John Bender, editor of *Dime Mystery*, *Ace G-Man*, *Strange Detective Mysteries*.

Bert Levine, assistant editor *Sports and Air magazines*.

William Holder, *Sports editor*.

*Hilman Periodicals* reports the editorial loss of: Gerard Lestz, assistant editor *Crime Confessions*, and Charles M. Early, assistant editor *Crime Detective*.

At *Fiction House* two editors are in the service: DeWitt Shank and Joseph Daffron.

At *Conde Nast Publications*, Miss Katherine Blake is now with the Red Cross Overseas Club, leaving *Vogue*. In combat service is Robert Carrick, formerly of *House and Garden*.

Here are some of the editorial losses among the book publishers, perennial home of bright young men:

*Harper Bros.:*

George W. Jones, Jr., Captain Air Force. Formerly head of *Staple Books*.

Paul Hoeber, U. S. Navy. Formerly head of *Medical Books*.

*Oxford University Press:*

William M. Oman, manager, College Department.

Philip Vaudrin, editor, Trade Department.

*Appleton-Century Co.:*

Lieut. F. S. Pease, Jr., editor, Educational Book Department.

Stanley N. Fisher, editor, Trade Department.

*Crown Publishers:*

Jerome D. Engel, Engineers, March Field. Editor, *Phoenix and Grammercy*.



**Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.:**

William A. Koshland, formerly assistant to the President.

**J. P. Lippincott:**

Bertram Lippincott, associate editor, now with the Coast Guard.

**Henry Holt:**

Glenn Gosling, associate editor, Trade.

**Dodd Mead:**

Edward H. Dodd, Jr., former editor, is now with the Office of War Information.

**E. P. Dutton:**

Thomas O'Connor Sloane III, former editor.

**Macmillan Company:**

Lieut. Theodore M. Purdy, Jr., associate editor, now at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Lieut. Victor Campbell, editor and manager of the Religious Department, now in the U. S. Navy.

Richard M. Brett, formerly Treasurer and General Manager, now Captain, U. S. Army Air Corps, Miami Beach, Fla.

**Blue Ribbon Books:**

Norman Snow, assistant to editor.

Among the publishers who reported "no loss to date" are *Random House*, *Samuel French*, *William Morrow*, *Little Brown* ("several men have gone from other departments, but no editors, yet"), *Viking Press*, *Coward-McCann*, *Reilly & Lee*, and *Greenberg* who answers, "but in a little while."

Major magazines that have not yet had their editorial staffs scattered to the four corners are *Coronet*, *Esquire*, *Modern Romances*, *Ladies' Home Journal* ("because the *Journal* is staffed mainly by women editors"), *Scientific American*, *Redbook*, *Country Gentleman*.

**I**N THE gadget mechanics field we heard from two magazines. *Popular Mechanics*, whose assistant managing editor, Julian P. Leggett, is now a Captain in the Army Air Force, and *Mechanix Illustrated*, whose associate editor, staff artist, and editor were all called.

In the photographic field, *U. S. Camera* lost its publisher, editor, and advertising manager. *Minicam Photography* (published by the *Digest*) lost its publisher, editor, and associate editor. Curiously, when



"What did George Jean Nathan say about it?"

the Draft Board in Washington let out the list of jobs in the news and magazine business whose occupants were considered "essential for the time being," the managing editor was marked down as "essential" but not the publisher. However, as everyone knows, members of local draft boards don't read the newspapers, so many a publisher and his editors may go off together.

George Carlin, of United Feature Syndicate, writing us in reply to the number of his editors in the armed forces: "No editors in—everything else, but." Stanley P. Silbey, editor of Columbia News Service was called up, and Harlan Trott, of the *C. S. Monitor's* Weekly magazine section.

As married men, without children, get their draft calls during the winter '42-'43, the editorial loss will continue, reaching perhaps 25% by spring. Space does not permit us to list the hundreds of replies from all the syndicates and trade journals, and we have eliminated some severe cases in which the publisher reported the loss but asked us "to cut" because "competitors will use this to weaken us."

What does this change over in personnel mean to the publishers? First, of course, the publisher has a slightly smaller staff; three people are doing the work of four. Trained editorial help isn't available, any

(Continued on page 47)

# Sunk! Saved!

By ROSS ROCKLYNNE

**I**F I knew all the rules of writing, I'd never have a rejection. I'd check my manuscripts against the rules for errors, and nothing but perfect manuscripts would go out."

If he knew all the rules . . . .

Sadly, the dream of the fictioneer has ever been to find a mechanically reliable blue-print for story-writing which would magically lend itself to the solution of any difficulty.

Sadly. There is no universal solvent, no Philosopher's Stone. We will have to struggle along, relying on intuition, on a sense of balance, on occasional gushers from Captain Arthur J. Burks' other-world: talent, which we all have in varying degree.

But here and there, like the parts of a machine which has not been assembled because certain other parts are missing, truths are found which specifically indicate rigid story laws—laws against which many errors can be checked: the narrative hook, for instance, which, to some extent, has been Jack Woodford's especial pride and joy; the climax (Bedford-Jones' "deadly sin"); the punch-line (Lester Dent's "that warm feeling.")

Similarly, I want to add to this growing heap of parts an almost-rigid story-law that is applicable to any piece of writing.

The theme of this story principle is: Sunk! Saved!

These two words *are* story, reduced to its barest essentials. They are the very essence of conflict; the primal struggle between negative and positive. They are down-up; black-white; no-yes. No reader can fail to be enthralled if the writer keeps constantly in mind those shocking contrasts.

A basic principle in fiction writing which you and all other selling writers have been using unconsciously is here given a name, and plucked out for a thorough examination. You can use this principle better, now.

This principle of sunk-saved can be applied to the story as a whole, to its natural divisions, to its smaller components.

In broad outline, stories devolve into either sunk: saved, or

saved: sunk. In the average pulp story, the protagonist is *sunk*, up to his waistline in trouble, very close to the story's opening; he is *saved*, all problems solved, very close to the conclusion.

Or, in the case of a yarn told from the viewpoint of the villain, the rule reverses: the villain is master of the situation in the opening paragraph, receives his just punishment as the story concludes. The first paragraph from "Atom Of Death," one of my pulp stories, illustrates:

Fowler Barry curled his lips into a thin smile of satisfaction as he pushed aside the oily vines of the jungle and stepped forth into the clearing where the drug gatherers' shack stood. This was as he had planned. They—Pete Slater and Luke Browne—should help him to establish his alibi, unwittingly, if, indeed, he should ever have to establish it.

Designate this as a "saved," a "yes," a "positive" situation. The structural end of the story is obvious. The last paragraph:

Yes, Fowler Barry, alias Jim Harrington, would pay for the murder of Anson Harkness.

The villain is *sunk*. The story, inclosed between a "yes" bracket at one end, and a "no" bracket at the other, promptly ends.

Were Fowler Barry of the above a sympathetic character, the first page of the story would convey the information that



he was innocently paying for the murder of Anson Harkness. (Sunk.) And the mood of the last sentence would concern itself with a smile of relief and satisfaction. (Saved.)

Newcomers to the writing game who find themselves unable to discover the fatal flaw in a reject might try applying the above. One of the most frequent of errors is the writer's negligence in beginning the story where it begins, ending it where it ends. He often waits two or three or more pages before pointing out that the protagonist is *sunk*, keeps typing a similar number of pages after he and the situation are *saved*.

This down-up principle can administer knockout blows to other flaws as well. In dialogue, for instance. When presenting information to the reader through conversation, the conversation is an argument—an argument which might be extremely mild, or a blaze of emotion.

The girl says, "No!"

The boy says, "Yes!"

For an important rule, remember that whenever possible, even in the simplest, shortest conversation between the most unimportant characters, the negative-positive note is to be added.

For a slick story, this yes-no will be a flavor—subtle, barely perceptible. But, because it is perceptible, it carries interest.

For a pulp story, the yes-no will be more definite, more emotional. I have a couple of series characters who are the best of friends, but I always make sure they are never in total agreement:

"It couldn't have been a gravity machine."

"Why not?" I asked, bluntly.

He looked rebellious, and then triumphant. "Because, smarty pants, only matter warps space and causes gravity."

And from a western, here are two lines of dialogue between two characters who appear for the first and last time in the story, but whom I deliberately gave a mild difference of opinion:

The oldster standing next to Stacey smoothed down his discolored

beard and spat. "Don't matter a mite whether they elect Mace or the new man."

His companion muttered, "They elect that new man, won't ever be the same. I aim to stick by Mace."

By this method, one not only advances information to the reader, but there is the small emotional shock or spark of excitement brought on by the inherent human love of a battle, no matter how inconsequential.

There is a great deal of convenience in this yes-no, sunk-saved, positive-negative—call it what you will—truth. I had been using the simple mechanical device for some time before I woke up to the fact that I was tortuously rediscovering it every time I wrote a yarn—when I could simply apply the principle consciously, rawly, blatantly, instead of sweating over the job of wondering *why* a certain scene lacked punch.

The tale I was at work on was dragging. I had a transition to make wherein the characters would be thrown into danger suddenly. But the material preceding that was tailing off into a wispy nothingness, without a conclusion. The old advice, to drop everything and make the transition, did not apply.

I reason that if danger was coming, the reader would be more severely jolted if the characters, just previously, were in an easy state of mind. The paragraphs following illustrate the solution:

"They will pass us through," she said confidently.

Harry's nerves had been vibrating like so many plucked harp strings. Now he relaxed. There really wasn't anything to worry about.

Thereafter things happened quickly. One of the road guards came down from the dais, strode toward the car. He stuck his head inside, fastened ironically mirthful eyes on Harry. (Sunk.)

Bataan and Corregidor always precede. North Africa in fiction writing. Glance through any of the Shakespearian dramas for evidence. In Shakespeare's comedies,

black defeat always is followed by complete victory, in rigidly applied teeter-totter fashion. In a tragedy, of course, the principle reverses: the denouement is always preceded by a high point of gleaming hope.

Illustrating this latter, you remember how plans for the marriage of Juliet to Paris had been made, how utterly hopeless the situation of the two lovers was. Juliet longs to die. (*Sunk.*) Then comes Friar Laurence with,

Hold, daughter; I do spy a kind  
of hope . . . (*Saved.*)

The plan, of course, involves a death-like sleep for Juliet. She will be buried. Romeo will be notified of the deception by mail,

And hither shall he come; and he  
and I  
Will watch thy waking, and that  
very night  
Shall Romeo bear thee hence to  
Mantua.

Romeo's suicide is a cruel audience shock arriving after the situation has already been saved—but Bill Shakespeare planned it that way.

In a book or a drama, this high point of hope—or despair—preceding the denouement is generally sustained intact for a great many pages; proportionately, that is, to the length of the work. Now and then there will be minor *sunk*: *saved* situations. In shorter stories, however, and in almost all pulp stories of any length, the main character or characters are never up but what they are down again very soon.

**WHEN** the story opens the hero is sunk.

But his condition then is as nothing compared with the truly horrible situation he finds himself in just before the successful climax. He cannot possibly pull himself out. He is dropping from the tenth story. The guillotine blade has already fallen halfway down its frame. The villain has brought up his gun and pulled the trigger. The buzz-saw is just about to—

Sunk! Really sunk!

And then—something happens.

Saved!

To illustrate again, from an action novel of mine:

Burke was all set to hurl himself  
at Dinakki, into the path of the ray  
that would shortly char his heart.  
Best to go down fighting. (*Sunk.*)  
And then—deliverance. (*Saved.*)

You see how it works? The worse the situation, the more the reader will appreciate triumph. While the writer tells the reader, "No," the reader whispers hopefully, "Yes! Yes!" When the writer finally agrees with the reader, there is a sudden release from unbearable suspense that is purely enjoyable.

Be it said in passing, however, that your protagonist's triumph should never depend on a *deus ex machina* device. The deliverance from danger may be unexpected, but it arises from some combination of circumstances for which the hero is responsible; therefore, he accomplishes his own salvation, plausibly, convincingly.

I want to give one more example of how a minor *sunk*: *saved* situation is injected. It has no other purpose than to make the reader catch his breath, to make his heart stop for a second—and then to make him let his breath out in a sigh of relief, as he sees that there is no real cause of alarm. See if you agree with me that the following would accomplish such a purpose, at least as far as the structure is concerned. This comes after the preceding excerpt wherein the villain is dispatched, everything is swell, and the hero is just about to make an escape in a machine of his own invention:

The temporum tubes lighted slowly—and then flickered. (*Sunk!*)

That scared him, until he remembered that the machinery was operating on direct current. The tubes burned steadily again. (*Saved!*)

This sort of teeter-tottering occurs without end in all types of stories. In the detective story, the protagonist has no sooner tracked down a clue which clearly, infallibly points out the murderer, than something happens which proves him wrong. In the sport story, the game is cinched when, to the eternal disgust of his teammates, the protagonist fumbles. In the

western, the hard-hearted rancher has decided to accept his wayward son back into the family circle, when he learns that the son has held up the bank. And in love stories—novels, plays, operas—boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy finds girl, wins girl, loses girl, boy saves girl, *et cetera, ad infinitum*, all according to the length of the yarn.

A story devolves into a succession of *sunk: saved: sunk: saved* situations.

It is the judicious handling of that little device which can make a story, for conflict and suspense are deeply inherent in it. Most old hands at the game will automatically ring in every breathtaking thrill which can be drawn from any direction, will keep the protagonist *sunk*, instinctively, for as long as human interest will allow. When the skein of events is filled to the bursting point of suspense, the professional relieves the situation with a "Yes," a "Saved." But very quickly, of course, events turn, get worse than before.

In the old *Argosy*, Eustace L. Adams, a pulp (and now a slick) writer, used to employ a trick which I recognize now as an admirable handling of the *sunk: saved* principle. A startling, totally unexpected, completely hopeless event transpires. One does not see how this situation can be saved. Nor does Adams bother to bring relief.

Expertly, he maintains suspense by allowing the hero to stand there, statuesque, lifeless, facing his inescapable doom.

Comes a paragraph, then, told from the viewpoint of the protagonist, of course, which completely fails to deal with the exigencies of the present situation. Facing death, the protagonist's thoughts go back to his childhood, or to college days, or to last week.

Suspense, maintained at one pulsating level, until the author—Adams, in this case—has the good sense to realize at what point the reader's nerves can no longer endure unless the hero is saved, but quick.

Then something—not *deus ex machinae*\* remember—happens.

\* Sometimes, in the old Greek tragedies, God, not the hero, slayed the villain. Unexpected Fate saved the day. The Latin phrase for this is the above.

Saved!

From pulp to slick to best-selling novel, the device is used. There is only the degree of subtlety to be considered.

In the "heavy-emotion" pulps, it may at times be extremely obvious: fists and stones and broken bones and imminent death are but forerunners of eventual triumph.

In a pulp love story, it is a matter of angry words followed by kisses; and vice versa. In the slick love story, the pattern is the same, save that the intensity is toned down.

In a drawing room novel, the frosty smile of a hostess may be the only action necessary to set our previously undismayed hero back on his heels.

However or wherever used, whether applied to beginning and end of a story, to dialogue, to individual paragraphs and sentences, a *sunk* or *saved* should be followed sharply by its opposite. Hollywood's celebrated "double-take" is perhaps the prime example of all.

Apply the principle to your own rejects.

A story that is "sunk" today, may be "saved" tomorrow.

It happens in real life.

#### Yardstick Wanted

SIR:

*Scripts*, out in Hollywood, is going to publish "Swing Shift" which won 80th prize in your contest. I find your magazine extremely useful and a *must* for the writer. Occasional articles like Maugham's may irritate the intensely practical; but are a leavening force.

"Mr. Smith Didn't Give a Hoot," if I know the editors of the *DIGEST*, is a toned-down title. This article is the kind of shot in the arm some writers need. The kind who think words plus words equal money. If they only care about money-making why don't they do that exclusively and leave writing to writers. The medical profession has its Oath. The writing profession needs a like yardstick to measure up to.

MARION MORRIS,  
323 San Pascual Ave.,  
Los Angeles, Calif.

• To two of our readers, at far ends of our country, the editors of the *DIGEST* ask for an Oath For Writers. Will Leo Margulies and James Hilton carve one out of 100 words—Ed.

# Sophisticated Romances

By FLORENCE STONEBRAKER

**L**AST WEEK I walked into a Santa Ana circulating library and asked to see their sophisticated romances. The lady regarded me frostily. "Oh," she said, "you mean that sex stuff."

That was not precisely what I meant, because that is not precisely what the modern, sophisticated romance is.

True, it is the offspring of the purely sex novel of the whirling twenties which could get by with little else than the bandying about of woman's most precious jewel in a series of erotic bedroom scenes. And its handling of sex situations is frank (although never offensive) because its appeal is to readers who demand something a little more meaty in their love scenes than the fadeout into everlasting bliss after one or two chaste kisses.

*But*—today these situations, titillating though they may be, are largely window dressing for the sophisticated love story which is, essentially, an exciting, swiftly moving, sensationally plotted story built around a modern, sophisticated, and topical leading character. Note that word *topical*.

Its appeal is to readers who became a little bored with sex—and nothing else but. They want the real lowdown on girls who seem just as real as themselves except that their lives are a little more exciting and glamorous. And they suspect that these girls really must do something else in life besides float in and out of bedrooms, wearing sleazy negligees. What else do they do? What is their work? What are their problems, their ambitions, their dreams? They want a story about all that—plus the sex motif to spice things up, along with a moving love story as the underlying theme.

For these readers the sophisticated romance was born.

I have had twenty of these 60,000 word lengths published. And in my opinion, they

offer an excellent apprenticeship in slick writing to the author who does not pooh-pooh the notion that a writer should be expected to put in an apprenticeship, involving plenty of hard work, before he is ready to be featured on the cover of *Cosmopolitan*.

You won't get rich doing them. But they do offer a steady income, along with a kind of writing which will help you to develop craftsmanship, a style of your own, and skill in characterization.

Now come along—and I'll make a stab at telling you what I know about doing a sophisticated romance.

Let's go back to that phrase—*topical character*. Because that's where we start. This character is really the germ idea for the sophisticated love story.

**W**HO are topical characters?

They are people doing modern jobs which seem more glamorous and exciting to the average reader than what he or she is doing. They are the people who sometimes get into the tabloids. The ones you read about in Winchell's column. Or see pictures of in *Life*.

Yesterday they were the torch singers, the cruise hostesses, the girls who ran highway stands or motor courts. One of my first was a girl lawyer.

Today we have a whole new crop of topical characters. The WAACS. The girl taxi drivers. The canteen girls. And so on.

Your leading character of today need not be connected directly with the war effort. But she—or he—must be as up to date as the women in uniform. Because what your reader is after is the real lowdown on these interesting people who are currently in the news.

If you can hit on such a topical character that has not already been overdone

by writers who thought of her first, your chances are excellent to sell simply the idea to a publisher, along with a brief synopsis of your story before you have written a word of it.

Which brings us to the second stage of your sophisticated romance—the plot synopsis.

And here's where a few headlines from the tabloid may come in handy. Because the plots are on the sensational side. I assume you know what a sensational plot is.

In working out this plot, there are two *musts* to keep in mind.

*First*—since this is sophisticated romance, the sex motif must run through it. There should be complications built around sex situations. Such as the hero discovering the heroine's middle aged employer in her bedroom at midnight under compromising circumstances which make things look very bad indeed for the girl. But—they only *look* that way. (Perhaps the girl forgot to lock her window and the wolf slithered in by way of the fire escape.) Because—

*Second*—the heroine must *not* be a promiscuous hussy. The reader wants to like and respect her. And sympathize with her. (The poor thing—she really did have an awful time of it. What with all those men hounding her, and she trying so hard to do the right thing.) As a general working rule, if she actually dallies with sexual delights, it should be only with the hero whom she will eventually marry.

She should, in other words, be a glamor-

ous modern girl whose personality and good looks inevitably attract the attentions and propositions of men, but who has enough pride and intelligence to keep everything under control. And when her foot finally does slip—she slips into the arms of her future husband.

How then, you say, get in so much sensationalism and sex?

One good way is to put in a secondary girl character who really is a bad one—and no fooling. This character, *not* the

heroine, can go as far as the censors will allow, and through her instrumentality you can often develop your plot complications.

For instance—I wrote a book about a problem girl.

We'll call her Sue. Sue was expelled from boarding school over an affair with her married piano instructor. (There was nothing *really* wrong. The gal was just high-spirited and thrill-hungry.) When Sue got home to Papa's California near-mansion she took a not-really-naughty yen for Papa's chauffeur, who lived over the

This interesting contributor writes:

"I started out at ten or so planning to be a concert pianist; later switched to law, graduated from George Washington University and am a member of the District of Columbia bar; and then finally turned to writing, perhaps because I am one of those people who would never find peace on this earth unless I could write.

"When I first took up writing, I studied with Thomas Uzzell, who was the first one to stimulate my interest in characterization—but who, incidentally, advised me to go back to law because he thought it unlikely I would ever sell a word I wrote. To prove he was wrong, I started selling pulps to *Snappy Stories*; and after that a string of forty or so, including a serial, to Munsey's. I have sold a hundred or more pulps in all, including an occasional confession. But I turned to the book field when the thought of doing another pulp made me shudder—and on the strength of a personal letter from Clifton Fadiman commenting favorably and encouragingly on the characterization in a book I had sent to Simon and Schuster.

"I have continued to do these circulating library books because they provide a steady market; because I find them as easy to do as sweeping the Navajo rugs in my Laguna Beach, by-the-sea cottage; and because I sincerely believe, as I suggest in the article, that they provide an excellent training for the writer who hopes ultimately to do something more ambitious in the book or magazine fields.

FLORENCE STONEBRAKER."

garage and was something of an artist. Having a touch of exhibitionism, Sue sneaked up to the chauffeur's room one night, thinking it would be a good idea to have him do a sketch of her in the nude. Chauffeur thought so, too, and so he did it. But before the posing was over, Mabel, the maid, came barging in. Now Mabel is our *real* hussy. She has been playing around with the chauffeur and a baby is in the offing. In addition, she has a viciously jealous streak. She managed to snatch the nude



sketch of Sue—and through the rest of the book, Mabel kept the plot going with that picture, finally using it for attempted blackmail.

Mama took her little problem girl to a psychiatrist, and the doctor and Sue promptly fell in love. But the psychiatrist didn't want a wife who was a little tramp—and for a time he was half convinced that Sue was one, as a result of that picture which Mabel showed all over town, selling views of it for a dime a peep. All ended happily, of course, with the doctor realizing that Sue was fundamentally a swell gal.

Now you will say—"Well, if that isn't just a lot of sex, I don't know what is. You and your talk of characterization."

Okay. Let's compare Sue with someone in real life. That girl you know in the next block. Madge Kelly.

All the neighbors gossip about what a wild one Madge is. It's scandalous, the way she has the men running after her. Take that scrape she got into with the married math professor during her last year at high. Everyone says what a pity it is Madge's father is too busy chasing around with his secretary, and her mother too busy with club work etc. to take any time to discipline their daughter. She's certainly headed for no good end.

Or—isn't she? Because they *do* say that these last months, since Sue got stuck on that nice Naval air pilot, she has gone into war work and shown a real flair for organizing and getting others to work. And she's taking a course in designing. Someone heard her say she wanted to have something she could turn her hand to after the war, in case her flier came home wounded and she had to go to work to support the two of them.

So—Madge does have a little more to her than simply a yen for men, doesn't she? She's proved she has ambition and initiative and pride—and intelligent thought for the future. Of course, the men still run after her, but since she fell in love she doesn't seem much interested in them. She seems to be growing up—

Yes, come to think about it, you might tie Madge up with that sensational plot

about Sue—and come up with a heroine who was real and sympathetic and worth writing about. If you try to write about her sincerely. Which gets us to the final stage of our novel—the writing of it.

If you want to write as good a one as you can, if you want the writing of it to go swiftly and pleasurably and to learn something while you're doing it—you should strive to make your characters stand up and come alive—as I tried to make Madge come alive for you. To the degree that you create real, vital characters, to that degree your book will be readable and absorbing and have reader value. I say it again, readers of these books want to feel you are taking them straight into the lives of real people—and your job is to create this illusion of reality for them.

At once I hear some hack writer stand up and yelp: "Nonsense. Nobody but a fool would bother about characterization or good writing for circulating library books. You'll be underpaid anyway. So knock it out any old way—and shoot it off."

Okay. Do that. And maybe you'll sell it. If your book reaches a publisher when he needs one quickly and is ready to grab at anything that will half do.

But you won't be building up any confidence in your work with that publisher so that he will continue to order from you regularly, whether he is pressed for copy to meet his release lists or not.

And your writing certainly won't be a shade more professional when you finish than when you started. You won't have developed craftsmanship. Or the slightest mastery of characterization—which, in the end, is what distinguishes the top-notch, high-paid writer from the hack who goes on grinding out mediocre stuff year after year and complaining that he's underpaid.

Why shouldn't you be underpaid—if you are unwilling to knuckle down and do the necessary work to learn how to turn out copy considerably better than thousands of others can do it?

Just how, you may say, do you go about making characters stand up and live? Exactly what do you mean by that anyway?

Well, I do *not* mean a glamorous blonde who comes galloping into your book out of nowhere, with no background, no distinguishing behavior traits, nothing convincing about her at all, really, except your word for it that she's a ravishing creature with a name.

Vital characters are the ones who seem like people we know in real life. And in real life, we are all what we are largely because of background, of behavior patterns set in childhood, because of things we wanted desperately and never had. Or because we had too much of everything we ever desired. Our own emotional reactions to the varied experiences of our whole life make us the individual we are today. We are all a mixture of good and bad. We are all much like other people—and yet there are qualities in each of us which distinguish us from everyone else and make us individuals.

Your sophisticated romance characters should also be individuals with behavior traits which show them to be the kind of person you say they are.

Study people you know. Your neighbors. Try to figure out the motives for their behavior. (And I don't mean the superficial motives attributed to them by the gossip-mongers.) Pry a little into their souls. Is fiftyish, philandering Mr. Brown across the street really a born woman chaser—or does his wife nag and belittle him so that he seeks these foolish escapades with other women to bolster up his ego? Is that stunning red-head in the boarding house next door really a snooty high-hat? Or—when she was fifteen was she so unmercifully crucified by neighborhood gossip that she developed a hate for all neighbors, everywhere?

Try to study your sophisticated romance characters the same way. Tie them up with people you know. Let your imagination play with them. And then—try to write about them as sincerely as you know how. This business of showing people as they truly are—and what happens to them because they are that way—is really what story writing is all about.

But—I do not mean that you should go

into tiresome, long-winded discussions to describe the background and motivation of your characters. Lord, no! These things should be sketched in swiftly, deftly, a touch here, a hint there, while your story is moving along. *That* is craftsmanship.

As with all light, escape fiction, your sophisticated romance should start with a dramatic situation which will catch the reader's interest in the first page or so. Preferably in the first paragraph. And keep it going on a breezy, swiftly paced temp.

Before you ever start to write, I'd read several recent releases in the sophisticated romance field. Such as:

"*Good Time Girls*," by Charles S. Strong; "*All The Pleasures*," by James Lumpp; "*Camp Follower*," by Florenz Branch; "*Sweet and Low-Down*," by Charlotta Baker. (These are all *Phoenix* releases.)

How much will you get for these books? Anywhere between a hundred and fifty and three hundred dollars. On several recent ones I averaged around two hundred, which included the sale of British reprint rights.

I told you you wouldn't get rich. But—the return is really not as low as it sounds. These books write themselves very quickly, once you get the hang of it. I've never taken over three weeks to do one, and now I find it quite simple to turn one out in two weeks. Which leaves a lot of time for other writing. And—if you write love pulps at a cent a word, do you average over fifty to seventy-five dollars a week on them? Figure it out.

I turned to sophisticated romances when I was fed up with doing love pulps. Continual writing within the strait-jacket restrictions of the love pulp formula plus keeping one eye slanted to the preferences and prejudices of individual editors was drying up whatever writing ability I had. Other published pulp writers have told me they've had the same experience. Perhaps you have had it.\*

When I started doing sophisticated romance novels, it was as if a spring had been released. Here, within certain limitations, I could write as I pleased. I could develop

\* For an editor's answer to this gentle slur, see a letter received this month from Leo Margulies, page 1. —Ed.



a style of my own. I could work for more honest characterization. And—they offered a steady market and one that paid promptly. It is an especially open market today, since people are being forced to spend more evenings at home and will resort to reading and circulating library books for their entertainment.

Every sophisticated romance I have written has been published. I've done seven in the last year. Each one is more fun to do than the one before. Try one. It may prove worth your while.

For the sincere student some study examples are given.

**"Passion In The Pantry"**—by Perry Lindsay. (Phoenix.)

**Story lead:** Hero, a rich man's son and broke, tries reporting and as his first assignment calls on a lush and flashy widow who hires him as butler. The widow has intentions toward hero from the start, but there are also several alluring members of the staff who help hero have fun in the pantry.

**Opening,** not noticeably different from start of "sweet love" type.

"As he strode along the street in the bright, hot sunshine of a Miami winter's day, two shop girls behind him stared and one nudged the other, eyes wide with excitement. And her excited whisper reached Kip's ears.

"I tell you," she was whispering sharply, "it is Stirling Hayden—and I'm going back to ask him for his autograph."

**Sample of writing,** showing handling of sex scene.

"Kip lifted her in his arms and carried her up the stairs and to her own room where he put her down on the bed. She lay for a little, one arm flung across her small face, and he heard her breath caught with small, shaken sobs.

"Shall I go away?" he asked her low.

"She did not answer but he heard her breath stop.

"If I go now, Theo, it's for always. I won't be dangled from a string. It's everything or nothing. Always—or not at all. What's it going to be?"

"She was very still and he turned to-

ward the door. . . . Then he heard her voice calling his name huskily.

"He turned and came back and stood beside the bed.

"Her arm dropped and she looked up at him.

"Her voice was husky as she said: 'Damn you,' and opened her arms to him."

**"The Devil's Daughter"**—by Peter Marsh. (Jonathan Swift Co.)

**Story lead:** Story of modern Sheherazade who, night after night in the arms of the man she both loved and feared, told him how she had killed six of the seven men who had helped to murder her husband.

**Opening:** "The woman who chose to be known only as Laura appeared at the Ecuador with a paid escort, who wore white tie and tails and the ribbon of the Legion of Honor in his buttonhole. But he was a paid escort, the Ecuador was crowded, the few empty tables having 'Reserved' cards on them, and the captain, talking to Laura and the paid escort, was immune to feminine charms from seven P. M. until four A. M."

**Sample of writing,** bit of "meaty" conversation leading to sex scene.

"The whole world has a trigger at its heart; bombs bursting over them; mines exploding beneath them. All I ask is to live long enough to have you hold me in your arms just once more."

"Is that what you told all of them before you gave them the *coup de grace*?"

"I didn't tell any of them I loved them, and not one of them meant anything to me alive. You are the only man with whom I would want life to last forever."

"All right," he said. "Right now I want you more than I ever wanted any woman, but don't get me wrong. I'm promising nothing."

"I'm asking nothing. . . ." "You don't have to go back to your hotel first, do you?"

"Yes, I think I'd better. I really don't want to have this dress torn to shreds."

"He laughed: 'That's out. No rough stuff. I promise.'

"Perhaps I like rough stuff. Perhaps I made you get rough. Perhaps I'd do it again."

"'All right, keed,' he said grinning.  
'But it takes two to get rough.'

"'Not the way I play.'"

"**The Playboy's Girl**"—by Thomas Stone.  
(This is one of mine.) **Phoenix.**

**Story lead:** Story of Washington government worker who by night has her taste of orchids, champagne, and the city's hot spots with a middle-aged playboy senator's secretary.

**Opening:** "Linda Terry got on the New York-bound train at Fairview, and before she'd got her tweed topcoat folded and arranged on the back of her seat, a dozen pairs of male eyes had gone into action. The eyes said: 'Now there is a little red-headed number worth looking at'. They said: 'What a figure.'

**Sample of writing**—Invitation to be a mistress.

"She said: 'Get to the point, Larry. Just what are you trying to say?'"

"He let her have it, quite bluntly: 'That I want you for my mistress.' And when she threw back her head angrily and started to tell him that he was wasting his breath, he wouldn't let her talk.

"'Shut up,' he said harshly. 'For once, I'm going to have my say, and you're going to listen. It isn't doing any harm to that virginal purity of yours you set such store by just to listen to me, is it? Now look, baby—get this straight. This proposition isn't by way of being an insult. I'm not proposing that you enter into any back-treet affair with me. It doesn't have to be that way any more—not these days. It's simply that I'm one of those people who prefer this kind of an arrangement to marriage. It works better. A man and woman can have more pleasure together if they're not chained by some damn law.'

"'And it's also such a nice way for a man to have his fun and avoid any real responsibility, isn't it?' Linda put in sweetly. 'Well, Larry, the answer is still no . . .' And she added lightly: 'If I have to be an ex-anything, Larry, it isn't going to be an ex-mistress. That's one little line I don't care to have written on my tombstone.'"

## Circulating Library Markets

*Arcadia House, Inc.*, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City, advises: "We are interested in clean wholesome romances of about 65,000 words for the circulating library field. Be sure to send us a brief synopsis first; before we see the full book. This saves time for both publisher and author."

Alice Sachs, of *Grammercy Publishing Company*, 419 Fourth Ave., N.Y.C., advises: "We publish circulating library fiction and are interested in light romances from sixty to sixty-five thousand words written in the third person and contemporary in period. Preferably an American background. War romances are particularly acceptable. We welcome books from unknown authors and pay outright for MS accepted. We prefer to judge stories based on the complete book, rather than on the outline only.

*M. S. Mill Co., Inc.*, 286 Fifth Avenue, New York City, long known in the circulating library field, advises that today they desire *only* top notch fiction of all kinds including mystery and westerns. Juveniles for teen ages on mystery and adventure. Juvenile dog and horse stories only if they are able to meet the best competition in the market. Mill is now selling largely through the book stores, schools, and libraries, and doesn't touch the type of yarn Woodford made famous.

Ken McCormick, editor of *Doubleday Doran*, at 14 West 49th St., New York City, says this on circulating library books:

"It is a little difficult to classify books definitely as lending library material, but we find that a high percentage of our mysteries, westerns and romances to find that outlet. Primarily it is light fiction with a happy ending with little or no objectionable or questionable material. 75,000 words is an average word count on them, and humor, current events backgrounds and high adventure are permissible. Though the books are classified as light fiction, a certain literary quality must be maintained."

*Coward Mc Cann* requirements are on page 43.

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"Her voice was husky as she said: 'Damn you,' and opened her arms to him."

**"The Devil's Daughter"**—by Peter Marsh. (Jonathan Swift Co.)

**Story lead:** Story of modern Sheherazade who, night after night in the arms of the man she both loved and feared, told him how she had killed six of the seven men who had helped to murder her husband.

**Opening:** "The woman who chose to be known only as Laura appeared at the Ecuador with a paid escort, who wore white tie and tails and the ribbon of the Legion of Honor in his buttonhole. But he was a paid escort, the Ecuador was crowded, the few empty tables having 'Reserved' cards on them, and the captain, talking to Laura and the paid escort, was immune to feminine charms from seven P. M. until four A. M."

**Sample of writing,** bit of "meaty" conversation leading to sex scene.

"The whole world has a trigger at its heart; bombs bursting over them; mines exploding beneath them. All I ask is to live long enough to have you hold me in your arms just once more."

"Is that what you told all of them before you gave them the coup de grace?"

"I didn't tell any of them I loved them, and not one of them meant anything to me alive. You are the only man with whom I would want life to last forever."

"All right," he said. "Right now I want you more than I ever wanted any woman, but don't get me wrong. I'm promising nothing."

"I'm asking nothing. . . ." "You don't have to go back to your hotel first, do you?"

"Yes, I think I'd better. I really don't want to have this dress torn to shreds."

"He laughed: 'That's out. No rough stuff. I promise.'

"Perhaps I like rough stuff. Perhaps I made you get rough. Perhaps I'd do it again."

"All right, keed," he said grinning. "But it takes two to get rough."

"Not the way I play."

"The Playboy's Girl"—by Thomas Stone.  
(This is one of mine.) **Phoenix.**

**Story lead:** Story of Washington government worker who by night has her taste of orchids, champagne, and the city's hot spots with a middle-aged playboy senator's secretary.

**Opening:** "Linda Terry got on the New York-bound train at Fairview, and before she'd got her tweed topcoat folded and arranged on the back of her seat, a dozen pairs of male eyes had gone into action. The eyes said: 'Now there is a little red-headed number worth looking at'. They said: 'What a figure.'"

**Sample of writing**—Invitation to be a mistress.

"She said: 'Get to the point, Larry. Just what are you trying to say?'"

"He let her have it, quite bluntly: 'That I want you for my mistress.' And when she threw back her head angrily and started to tell him that he was wasting his breath, he wouldn't let her talk.

"Shut up," he said harshly. "For once, I'm going to have my say, and you're going to listen. It isn't doing any harm to that virginal purity of yours you set such store by just to listen to me, is it? Now look, baby—get this straight. This proposition isn't by way of being an insult. I'm not proposing that you enter into any back-treet affair with me. It doesn't have to be that way any more—not these days. It's simply that I'm one of those people who prefer this kind of an arrangement to marriage. It works better. A man and woman can have more pleasure together if they're not chained by some damn law."

"And it's also such a nice way for a man to have his fun and avoid any real responsibility, isn't it?" Linda put in sweetly. "Well, Larry, the answer is still no . . ." And she added lightly: "If I have to be an ex-anything, Larry, it isn't going to be an ex-mistress. That's one little line I don't care to have written on my tombstone."

## Circulating Library Markets

*Arcadia House, Inc.*, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City, advises: "We are interested in clean wholesome romances of about 65,000 words for the circulating library field. Be sure to send us a brief synopsis first; before we see the full book. This saves time for both publisher and author."

Alice Sachs, of *Grammercy Publishing Company*, 419 Fourth Ave., N.Y.C., advises: "We publish circulating library fiction and are interested in light romances from sixty to sixty-five thousand words written in the third person and contemporary in period. Preferably an American background. War romances are particularly acceptable. We welcome books from unknown authors and pay outright for MS accepted. We prefer to judge stories based on the complete book, rather than on the outline only.

*M. S. Mill Co., Inc.*, 286 Fifth Avenue, New York City, long known in the circulating library field, advises that today they desire *only* top notch fiction of all kinds including mystery and westerns. Juveniles for teen ages on mystery and adventure. Juvenile dog and horse stories only if they are able to meet the best competition in the market. Mill is now selling largely through the book stores, schools, and libraries, and doesn't touch the type of yarn Woodford made famous.

Ken McCormick, editor of *Doubleday Doran*, at 14 West 49th St., New York City, says this on circulating library books:

"It is a little difficult to classify books definitely as lending library material, but we find that a high percentage of our mysteries, westerns and romances to find that outlet. Primarily it is light fiction with a happy ending with little or no objectionable or questionable material. 75,000 words is an average word count on them, and humor, current events backgrounds and high adventure are permissible. Though the books are classified as light fiction, a certain literary quality must be maintained."

*Coward Mc Cann* requirements are on page 43.

# New York Market Letter

By HARRIET A. BRADFELD

**N**EW publications continue to spring up. The number is surprising, especially since the talk of paper control becomes more pressing. Publishers may be cut 20% on paper, or, more likely, every other paper user may be cut, and then if that doesn't work, publishers, too, will be cut.

The whole paper problem is the same as stated in the *DIGEST* for January. There is a scarcity of labor in cutting lumber, and running paper mills, a scarcity of chemicals needed for making paper, and a scarcity of transportation to bring paper from the mill to the printer.

Publishers are using a two-way front in the Washington lobby. One side tells official Washington that the free press must have all the paper it wants. The other side tells the publishers back home that a ten to fifteen per cent cut would be economically beneficial to 80% of the magazine publishing industry. Advertising rates, and retail price per copy would remain the same, while press runs would be lowered, thus cutting costs.

If press runs are cut, and the number of pages per issue remain the same, free-lance writers are ahead. If press runs remain the same, and the number of pages per issue are reduced, free-lance writers will have a diminished market.

The economic situation is simply that most advertisers have nothing to sell and don't especially care if magazine circulations come down 10 to 15%. Meanwhile, publisher, especially those wedded to a high ABC circulation guarantee, look favorably on an alibi to deliver fewer copies per issue. Circulation, in the magazine busi-

ness, is almost always a loss. Thus, the publisher's Washington lobby looks two ways.

For the first six months in 1942, paper reduction will not affect the magazine publishing business as far as the writer is concerned, other than killing off still born magazines. Meanwhile, new books continue to appear.

**T**HE Goodman group leads off with three new books. There is an aviation book which, for the specialized writer, looks like a good, wide-open market. The first issue is in preparation, and the date of its appearance on the stands, together with the title, will be released. The magazine will use articles on any phase of aviation without limitation. It includes anyone in aviation, not merely flyers, but people producing the planes, mechanics, women in various phases of work. Some attention will be given also to model planes. Articles should be written for the average reader interested in this currently popular subject. Technical terms may be used, but must be such that the average reader understands them. It is important, also, that the subject matter must be authoritative in its treatment. It is no good writing about some phase of aviation which one has heard about. One must really know the intricacies of the subject in hand. Good photographs are important. With some types of articles they would be required.

Material for this new Goodman magazine may run from 1500 to 2500 words. There will be a little very short material used, too, if specially interesting and adapted to the book. Payment is made on acceptance. The basic rate is two cents



a word. Photographs are paid for extra. The editor is Jay D. Blaufox, author of books and many articles on aviation. The address is 366 Madison Avenue.

Editor Blaufox tells me that a great deal of the material for magazines of this type must be cleared through the War Department, to insure that no military secrets are being broadcast. This takes time, and slows down considerably the reports to authors on their manuscripts. If a writer is in doubt about his material, he can speed up matters by having his article cleared before submitting it to the editor. He should address: Review Branch, War Dept., Bureau of Public Relations, Munitions Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Second of the new Goodman magazine is a fact-detective book: *Leading Detective Cases*. The first issue of this will be out on the stands early in December. It is about the same in scope and requirements as *Amazing Detective Cases*, *Complete Detective Cases*, and *National Detective Cases*. In appearance, it is different, being in the larger flat format. Robert E. Levee is the editor of all four of these magazines. He prefers to use cases which are as current as possible. However, he will also include some older cases, provided they have not appeared in any publications in the field during the past three years. And he keeps up a detailed file in his office of cases used, so checking is an easy matter. The best average length is 5,000 words, with an occasional short of 1,500 to 2,000 words. Payment varies according to the age of the cases. Current cases (recently completed in the courts) bring two cents a word. Older cases vary from a cent to a cent and a half per word; all on acceptance. Pictures are three dollars apiece, on publication. These four fact-detective magazines edited by Mr. Levee are located in the office at 366 Madison Avenue.

Details of the third new Goodman publication were not available at this writing, but will be soon. This is reported to be a magazine of general interest. It is being edited at 330 West 42nd Street.

**P**OPULAR announces another love pulp magazine to be issued presently, the first issue dated March. The title is *Love Novels*. Mary Gnaedinger is the editor, with Al Norton acting as editorial director. This is to be broader in scope than most love magazines. There are no tabus except those of good taste. Stories must be well written, entertaining, and definitely love plots. The confession story is not considered. But within the definition of a love story, as much variety as possible is sought. The theme may be young love or married love. Stories may be from the girl's or man's point of view, though mostly the girl's. They may be first or third person. A love story implies quite a bit of glamor, but not necessarily the cutie-pie sort of stuff. Don't drag in the war, unless it is essential to the plot. The story may well use various phases of war effort, however, or it may just be escape theme. Stories will be all modern; the love affairs of people we understand, whose problems we appreciate. The needs now are for novelettes of 12,000 to 20,000 words, with some shorts of 3,000 to 5,000 words. Short, romantic, semi-light poetry is wanted. Payment, I understand, will average a cent a word, on acceptance. The poetry brings the usual twenty-five cents a line. Address Popular Publications, 205 East 42nd Street.

Hillman is adding that long contemplated movie-fan magazine to his lineup. The title is *Movieland*. The editor is Ruth Waterbury, well known through her former connection with *Photoplay*, *Movie Mirror*, etc. The first issue is to be dated February, out early in January, at ten cents. The publication office will be in Hollywood, and not here in New York with the other Hillman publications.

*Flying Cadet* is another new air magazine. This is intended to appeal to air enthusiasts among older boys, up to 18 or so, who have outgrown the thrill of model planes and want to learn about how actual planes are made and the many jobs open in connection with various phases of the industry. Material is of the inspirational type, in lengths up to 2,000 words. Payment is on publication, from two to five cents per word. T. J. Underwood is editor.

Office space is at 420 Lexington Avenue.

Parents' Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, is getting out two new comics: *True Aviation Comics Digest* and *Funny Book*. This company also publishes *True Comics*, *Real Heroes*, and *Calling All Girls*.

**T**HE Thrilling group has added some new titles to its comics, and is now publishing eight of these magazines: *Thrilling Comics*, *Startling Comics*, *Exciting Comics*, *America's Best Comics*, *The Fighting Yank*, *Real Life Comics*, *Real Funnies*, and *Cocoo Comics*. These are entitled in a separate office of their own at 45 West 45th Street. All manuscripts should be addressed to the editor, Richard E. Hughes, at that address. There is an open market here for material for the various adventure comics and for *Real Life Comics*. This latter includes both glamorous characters out of history—any period—and interesting characters and stories from the news of the day. In the adventure comics, there are many serial characters, but each incident is a separate unity, and the story may be written by anyone around the character without reference to what has gone before. These adventure comics are a good field for pulp writers. It seems that once one gets the hang of what is wanted, it is possible to achieve a very high degree of acceptance. Material may be submitted either in synopsis form or in finished manuscript. And the editor is on the alert for new writers, especially ones from the pulp field. Payment is made by arrangement with the author, and is by the printed page. Study the magazines for characters and types of material wanted. And remember to address it to 45 West 45th Street.

Hillman's *Love Confessions* has changed its title to *Life and Love Confessions*. Extra pages are being added, and more copy bought. But there is no change in policy. Mary Rollins edits this, together with *Real Story*. Address—1476 Broadway.

Street & Smith's *Air Progress* is going monthly with the February issue, on sale January fifth. It began as an annual, changing last spring to a quarterly. C. B. Colby is the editor. Address—79 Seventh Avenue.

On *Liberty*, the magazine with nine lives, fiction lengths are remaining fairly steady, and the types used are about the same as in the past. Kathryn Bourne is the associate editor in charge of fiction. Non-fiction may be sent in cold, or you may better submit the article first in outline or synopsis form. This gives the editor an opportunity to suggest desirable treatment and angles, if the idea appeals to him. Jerome Eliison is editor; Lee Pasquin, managing editor. Shepard Butler, Gerald Mygatt, and Arthur M. Sherrill are no longer associated with the magazine. Address of *Liberty*: 205 East 42nd Street.

*New Love*, of the Popular-Fictioneers list of pulps, is changing over from a bi-monthly into a monthly, beginning with the February issue. More stress is being placed on stories in which girls are engaged in the war effort. But otherwise the magazine continues its general policy of printing stories about the kind of people you like; about girls with sweethearts in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps; about girls who are doing men's jobs and doing them well; typical girls with whom the readers may identify themselves. Lengths are the same: 10,000 tops for novelettes; 3500-5000 best for shorts. Payment starts at a cent a word on this and on *Romance*. Peggy Graves edits both. Address—205 East 42nd Street.

**WILLIAM E. LENGEL**, formerly with *Cosmopolitan* and *Liberty*, has joined Fawcett Publications in the capacity of supervising editor of the three confession magazines, *True Confessions*, *Life Story*, and *Romantic Story*. Miss Geraldine Thoats, formerly managing editor of *The Woman*, has replaced Ruth Marrow as editor of *Life Story*. Beatrice Lubitz and Erma Lewis continue on the other two magazines, respectively. Correspondence should be addressed to the individual editors. But a story submitted to one may be considered to have been read with the needs of all three in mind. The basic rate of payment has been raised to two and a half cents per word.

A definite change in story policy has been made in the past months, and writers



should note these editorial suggestions carefully:

The old story of the "girl who is seduced, who suffers, and who repents," is dead. The editors do not want any stories based on seductions or abortions. Stories should be told in first person, and must convince the reader that it is a true story of interesting human experience. But the editors are not looking for a heavily complicated story. There will be, they say, complications in any good story. But they urge that the complications stay in the realm of believability and do not go so far as to make the story fictional, or be so involved as to spoil the readability of the story. Romance and love will continue to be the major themes, and will play a part in every story. Material will continue to be based on familiar emotional problems, such as infidelity, incompatibility, money, avarice, jealousy, harmful pride, temptation, etc. The best stories will continue to come from real life. Wherever it is consistent with the story, a theme of self-help or self-improvement is desirable, so that the reader may freely profit from the experiences related. And remember that these magazines are purchased for *entertainment*. In *Life Story*, the autobiographical angle is stressed, and every story gives the reader something of the childhood and family background of the narrator. To a less extent, this holds true for the other two magazines. Stories should mirror life today—honestly, frankly, but always with good taste. Stories may be told by men or women. More attention to authentic details of background is urged; also, more variety of background. Backgrounds should not merely be true to life; they should characterize the story itself. In short, any human situation or predicament that plays a legitimate part in human existence, may be used, if presented in good taste and in a manner that cannot be objected to on moral grounds. Address of Fawcett Publications: 1501 Broadway.

Lawrence De Neusville has been appointed editor of *Young America*, 32 East 57th Street. He replaces Winthrop Bru-

baker. There is no change in editorial policy.

Morris Weeks, Jr., and George Koether have joined the staff of *Look Magazine* as associate editors. *Look* is at 511 Fifth Ave.

Mrs. Frances Harrington is the new managing editor of *Mademoiselle*. She takes the place of Mrs. Alice Wade Robinson, who is joining the WAVES. Mrs. Harrington was formerly editor of *You*, the fashion magazine, now discontinued. *Mademoiselle* is Street & Smith's monthly for smart young women. Address—1 East 57th Street.

Wade Nichols is the new editor of *Click*, succeeding Allen Chellas. Charles Bonsted, formerly associate editor of Fawcett's *Mechanics Illustrated*, has been made associate editor of *Click*. Address—535 Fifth Avenue.

Elizabeth Pinkston, magazine editor of the new monthly published by the Parents' Institute, *Predictions of Things to Come*, informs me that for the time being at least, they will not be in the market for articles by free-lance writers. The address is 52 Vanderbilt Avenue.

*Popular Science Monthly*, 353 Fourth Avenue, reaches an all-time high with a January print order of a million copies. This magazine uses a good deal of material connected with the war effort, specializing now in articles on Science in Industry and on Science in the Military Field. The editors are glad to consider suggestions for articles in outline or resume form, as well as the completed material. Everything must be illustrated. The department of craftwork also continues, with emphasis on things not affected by the war. There has been no real basic change in the policy of the magazine during the past several years. A writer would do well to familiarize himself with current copies, however, before submitting material. Charles R. McLendon is the editor. Rates of payment are excellent.

*Outdoor Life*, edited by Raymond J. Brown, at 353 Fourth Avenue, has made no change in policy. But the limitations imposed on arms and travel is necessarily reflected in the slant of the material used.

(Continued on page 45)

# Got Any Tomatoes?

By AUGUST LENNIGER

"PUT some of the things you've been telling us into stories and we'll be seeing you in the *Post*!"

I said that as Steve McNeil was bidding us farewell, but I didn't think the occasion would be commemorated exactly a year later by the appearance of McNeil's *Jimmy Buys Some Toms* in the November 14, 1942, issue of *Saturday Evening Post*.

It was three o'clock in the morning, a very wet one, in mid-November, 1941, when I threw that parting challenge at Steve McNeil. The place, a room in the St. Helen's Hotel, Chehalis, Washington. The evening had begun as a story conference, but for the last two or three hours Steve had held Beatrice\* and myself almost spellbound as he explained the many things that a pair of naive New Yorkers wanted to know about the Pacific Northwest. I deliberately led him on, for I wanted to find out what Steve had to write about—and which hadn't been going into his stories. That was the purpose of my West Coast trip.

For two years McNeil had been telling me in letters that he had difficulty in finding plots; that he didn't know what to write about. I came back at him with occasional hints that his job as Company Commander of CCC Camp Doty must be literally crawling with story germs; that the mountains, forests, and industries of Oregon and Washington, even the blue Pacific lashing at their rocky coasts, harbored many more. But the stories Steve

This is the sort of article that burns the professors up. It begins where they end, and discusses points they have never considered. If there is such a thing as a definitive article on selling stories to the *Post*, this is it.

For twenty years Beatrice and August Lenniger have worked with free lance writers, and in telling about the hard won success of one author, Mr. Lenniger managed to cover, in the grand manner, all the tricky steps in selling to the *Post*. He illuminates beautifully, not only for his client, Steve McNeil, but for all who will study this article, the way to the *Post*. This is the first article since September, 1936, from Mr. Lenniger, and trust it won't be so long before the next.

had been sending me were inevitably romances about a prize fighter in love with a society girl or some other form of Cinderella in reverse. His story locales were either indefinite, or as far afield as London or New York—about which Steve knew as little as I knew of the Yakima Valley. Despite all that, his na-

tural talent for making characters human had enabled us to "salvage" most of these would-be slick romances to the love and sports pulps.

One day in the spring of 1941 I had mentioned in a letter that I needed a romance featuring an automobile for one of the women's slicks. Somewhat apologetically, Steve sent me "*Guardian in the Night*," a story about the freight trucking business on West Coast Highway 101. Quite unconsciously he had produced a story that was both *informative as well as entertaining* because he was writing about people and things he knew intimately. My enthusiasm proved contagious, for the story became Steve's first slick sale, to *Household Magazine*.

I was pointedly reminded of "*Guardian in the Night*" that very afternoon last November when we were on our way to see Steve McNeil. We had crossed the Columbia River at Astoria, Oregon, and our map showed we had some fifty miles more to go on the Washington side of Camp Doty. The rain was coming down in sheets, Highway 101, a cathedral aisle through forests of towering spruce, was getting pretty dark; as it wound into the mountains, S curve warning signs became more frequent. I

\*Mrs. L.

rounded one of them, and a string of trailer trucks loomed ahead. Each carried a single spruce log whose periphery exceeded that of a New York subway car. For ten miles we ground behind those fourteen-wheeled behemoths in first and second gear at a speed of about five miles per, and had plenty of time to speculate on just what would happen to the logs when they reached their destination. Later I asked Steve, and he casually explained that "they put them on spindles in the lumber mill and slice them to paper thinness in making plywood. . ."

"Why haven't you given me a story about that?" I asked.

"But lumber stories must be just as commonplace as my prize-fight romances," he protested.

"Yes—if you mean the pattern that features men in caulked boots fighting it out with peavys during a spring drive," I agreed. "But I don't recall reading any about plywood manufacturing nor about a guy operating one of those caterpillar tractors they use to get your big trees down to the trucks, as you explained a while back."

It took some time to sell Steve the idea that workaday things around him could be made glamorous. I had to repeat what other agents tell quite a few other writers: "Every school teacher in Nebraska and every soda jerk in North Dakota writes stories about Hollywood; every mechanic in Nevada and California wants to write about Times Square and Park Avenue. Most of them haven't been there, and if they have, they've seen these places as superficially as we are visiting the Coast. Why don't you write about Washington and Oregon? Take that salmon brokerage business in which you mentioned your cousin was engaged. How many people in these United States know what a salmon broker is, Steve? To most of us, salmon is something that comes out of a can. There've been stories about salmon fishing—but I've still to read my first about a salmon broker!"

We got Steve to talk about his experiences with the CCC, too. As Company Commander at Camp Doty, he and one other

Army officer shared the entire responsibility for all the camp property, for the feeding, clothing and housing of the boys, for the correct accounting of the funds, for discipline and morale. Steve explained how they fed them very well on a ration of around fifty cents a day. And how the CCC worked for the different technical agencies—the Soil Conservation Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service. He told us how most of the boys gained from ten to forty pounds after they had been in a year. And how they were extremely valuable in the fire season as well-trained, self-sufficient mobile units that could be rushed into a fire region on half an hour's notice.

*Nothing to write about!*

They were all very commonplace things to Steve, but he could entertainingly explain them for hours on end. I remember reminding him of that. "But you're interested because you're visiting these parts for the first time," he argued. And I tried to drive home the point that there were millions of Americans who would be even more interested because they hadn't been there, and probably never would get to see the Pacific Northwest for themselves.

Steve wanted to know how to find plots to fit some of that local color.

"It's really very simple—you did it unconsciously in your own '*Guardian in the Night*.' You had a young boy who wanted to become a truck driver; you showed how and why he thought this the most wonderful job in the world. You made the attainment of his desire seem impossible. Then you thought up a character with exactly the opposite viewpoint; the wife of a truck-fleet operator who hated the 'dirty old trucks' in which her husband was absorbed. You threw these two characters together—and naturally you had a *plot*. It pretty much built itself; it sprang completely from your trucking business background. Your plot, your characters, your theme, your conflict—they all sprang from the trucking business along Highway 101. And you can do the same thing with any other of your

local industries, or the CCC boys at Camp Doty."

We discussed other ways of getting new plots out of local backgrounds, too. Elementary ones, like using the "Cinderella in reverse" theme of Steve's earlier romance and sports yarns and recasting the characters in a CCC camp, which would naturally result in new situations and conflict that would spring from the background. Or of substituting "a guy who drives a cat in the woods and becomes involved with a Big Lumber Baron's daughter when she accompanies Dad on an inspection tour," for Steve's favorite "prize fighter in love with debutante" motif. Pretty corny and obvious stuff—but with unusual, glamorous local color to implement the situations and characters, those plot ideas could have been developed into good "different" stories. We plotted half a dozen of them that night, including a serial for *Household Magazine* which had been giving Steve trouble.

Perhaps we were plotting just a little too well, for we even worked out one for Steve's literary future. If a certain story\* which he had recently cut and revised would "stick" with *Cosmopolitan*, Steve would resign his Army Reserve commission for a fling at full-time writing; the *Cosmo* check providing the grubstake. The "if" part worked out all right, for I heard from my office a couple of weeks later that the sale had gone through. The flaw in this plot turned out to be Hitler, Hirohito and Company.

Of course, Steve didn't resign then. The CCC had important work to do; I received a series of address changes as Steve was shifted from station to station, "without even time to unpack my typewriter," as he told me in one letter. But despite his heavy duties, he did manage to come through with a new story in April. Said the accompanying note: "'Tomatoes Are Queer Things' is based on an anecdote I heard from one of the foremen at Cowiche, and remembering your vehement insistence that I write local stories, I pounced on it at once."

It turned out to be an interesting piece

\**Summer Is the Time for Fun*, which appeared in the July, 1942, *Cosmopolitan*.

about how fruit brokers operate in the Yakima Valley, how they buy up produce from farmers and resell it to truckers from Seattle; it explained how a broker could lose his shirt on perishable items if he guessed wrong on the weather. Here's a brief synopsis of "Tomatoes Are Queer Things." (See if you spot its weakness.)

*Nineteen-year-old Jimmy has the full responsibility of their brokerage business thrust upon him because his older brother, Joe, is in the hospital. Jimmy is annoyed at Joe's admonition, "Don't try making any money, see? Just don't get stuck. Don't go hog-wild when you buy today." Jimmy is also irritated by seeing their wealthy competitor, Mark Darrah, over whom Jimmy's girl "seems to have lost her mind, just because that guy's gone to college and has a big car." It would be swell, Jimmy thinks, if he could put over a big, smart deal while Joe is in the hospital. If he had ten thousand boxes of tomatoes in the warehouse, and supposing it rained tomorrow so they couldn't pick tomatoes, and supposing everyone, particularly Mark Darrah, sold out on Saturday morning, Jimmy would come out on top. He could get "toms" at twelve cents a box this morning, and, if it rained, could sell them to the truckers for twenty. But if it didn't rain, Brother Joe would boil him in oil. Jimmy sniffs the breeze, asks the opinion of farmers as to whether or not it will rain, and plunges on ten thousand toms. Later he sees the local forecast, "fair and warmer," and wishes the tomatoes back on the vines. It does happen to rain; after some dangerous holding out, Jimmy gets twenty cents a box. Darrah, who had gambled on the price breaking, is forced to buy a thousand crates from Jimmy to cover "short" commitments. Jimmy gloats; feels pretty cocky when he reports to Brother Joe. And that's that.*

I can hear you saying, incredulously, "Was that a Post story?"

It wasn't. It had nice local color, informative detail about the produce brokerage business, but it left you cold. Steve McNeil was so preoccupied with his background that he'd forgotten that a good story needs

*conflict*. As written, *Tomatoes Are Queer Things*" would certainly have been bounced by the entire smooth-paper magazine circuit. Yet, the background had excellent possibilities; if Steve could put characters into it, this looked like a sure thing for *Satevepost* or *Collier's*, *American* or *Country Gentleman*—any of the big ones.

Keeping my fingers crossed that Steve would "catch," I dictated the following letter:

Dear Steve:

"*Tomatoes Are Queer Things*" has some excellent color in its produce-brokerage background, but you failed to get a story out of it. Atmosphere alone doesn't make a salable yarn; it's the human relationships and human conflicts, properly integrated with the background, that usually do the trick.

Stripped of its background, here's all we find in the way of plot: "Nineteen-year-old Jimmy makes good in spite of Brother Joe's doubts." The trouble is that Jimmy succeeds all down the line; he has a few anxious moments, but never any real opposition. There isn't any *conflict*, nor even complication. The fact that luckily for Jimmy it does happen to rain, springs your climax by sheer old fortuitous circumstance. It's like the traditional beginner's horse-race story, in which the hero bets all he owns on a certain nag and the hundred-to-one shot comes through.

You have all the elements of a swell plot, but completely fail to develop them. On page 3 you imply that Mark Darrah had supplanted Jimmy in Anne's affections. Because of this Jimmy wouldn't mind getting Mark by the short hair. But on page 4, after barely suggesting this motivation, you have Jimmy decide, as regards Anne, "Well, the hell with that." You very vaguely imply that Jimmy's grudge against Mark may have had something to do with Jimmy's plunging on ten thousand crates of tomatoes. After these two or three vague references to Anne, who never appears in the story, you forget her completely. You work out the story so that Jimmy constantly has the upper hand over Mark in the tomato dealines; you let Jimmy get pretty cocky with Brother Joe, and show Jimmy rather rubbing it in on Mark—which doesn't help

to make Jimmy overly sympathetic. And you drag in the irrelevant, unconvincing romance between Brother Joe and his nurse on the two occasions when Jimmy visits the hospital. The nurse has nothing to do with your story; only clutters it up. You haven't made the reader sufficiently dislike Mark so as to provide any real satisfaction when Jimmy applies the squeeze. We know it was pure dumb luck when Jimmy guessed right on the weather, and we are not greatly impressed by his success.

Why didn't you bring Anne into the story *actively*? She is the real motivation, both of your plot and of your theme. Here's a rough idea of how you might do it:

Jimmy, through Brother Joe's teachings and his own experience, is characteristically *conservative*. It is his conservatism in all things, including love, that causes Anne to consider him a "stick in the mud." Goaded by Anne's apparent admiration of Mark's superficial aggressiveness, Jimmy steps out of character; he tries to be smart and flashy like Mark. Will Jimmy win or lose, both in love and in tomatoes, by this character transition? Did Anne *really* want him to be different? This is your theme, and Anne is the driving force.

Your plot could carry it out something like this: Use present situation of Jimmy in charge while Brother Joe is in hospital. Jimmy sets out to be conservative in his buying. He bumps into Anne or Mark, or both, and they get him so darned mad that he buys ten thousand crates of tomatoes against his better judgment. Perhaps this happens as result of lovers' tiff between Anne and Jimmy, the girl innocently saying something that causes hero to invest so heavily in toms. Mark Darrah is the real villain who has baited a trap for Jimmy; Anne didn't realize Mark was using her as a tool. Anne might be the daughter of one of the growers from whom Jimmy buys the tomatoes, thus be subject to suspicion of self-interest in the deal. In their quarrel, Anne might challenge Jimmy, "If you had the courage of your convictions, like Mark, you would be a success, too!"

Now, build up the situation that Mark Darrah definitely gets the upper hand through Jimmy's own bungling. Jimmy has walked into baited trap; not only is he in danger of making a fool of himself with Anne, but also likely to financially ruin Brother Joe. The deeper you get Jimmy in-



volved, the blacker you make things look, the more his pride suffers through Anne, the more suspense you'll obtain. And the greater will be your triumph when Jimmy comes through. Even though realizing that Jimmy's guess on the weather is pure dumb luck, the reader will then get a kick out of seeing the tables turned on Mark.

Your climax, made possible by the fact that it *does* rain, should actually be sprung because Mark overplays his hand. Mark does so in two ways: by bragging to Anne at his cleverness in pulling a fast one on Jimmy; by speculating the wrong way on the weather. Perhaps Jimmy thinks that Anne deliberately double-crossed him, even accuses her of this, and here of course the sparks would fly. It is when Mark takes time out to gloat a little prematurely, rubs it in on Jimmy, that Anne about-faces. Of course you will build up the clinch ending, show perfect understanding between Anne and Jimmy, probably a resolution that even though this longshot gamble worked once, she is cured of wanting Jimmy to be anything but conservative, now that it's going to be part of her business, too. . . .

Please consider the above extemporaneous replot suggestions merely as a springboard for your own ideas, and work out a plot that fits your situations properly along these basic lines. I'm sure you can make a tremendously better story out of it. Try to retain as much of the present atmosphere as you possibly can.

Sincerely,

ON April 24 a new version of the story came through, now called "*Jimmy Buys Some Toms*." I picked it up with misgivings—so very much depends on how enthusiastically an author can "see" revision suggestions in a case like this. All too often the writer has no real liking for the replot, but does his best to follow your suggestions—and you get a structurally improved, but lifeless, manuscript. Writers sometimes gleefully tell of their experiences with an editor who made them revise a story, then asked for return of the original, and published it—*proving that editors are nuts!* Perhaps that's why many editors I know avoid suggesting revisions to writers. You're sticking out the old neck every time you suggest one; you can never be sure the re-

sult won't be worse than the original. *And you always feel like a heel when you've got to turn down such a rewrite.*

But before I had gotten beyond page 1 of "*Jimmy Buys Some Toms*" it was obvious that here was one that would make up for a lot of disappointments. Steve McNeil had not only caught the pass—he'd carried it for a touchdown.

Let's take a look at what Steve had done to it. Here are the opening paragraphs of the new version:

This morning Jimmy felt like a dope. He walked along fruit row, between the big warehouses, hoisting himself along with a mental kick in the seat of his pants, and if he had known that he would be kicking himself with greater vigor before the weekend was over, it is doubtful whether he would have gone to work at all that morning.

The air was clear and crisp, with the promise of warmth, the way it is early in the morning in the Yakima Valley, but to Jimmy the air was just something to breathe, and even that was not satisfactory inasmuch as Mark Darrah was also permitted to breathe the same air. Jimmy did not see why Mark Darrah did not stay in that cow college and get educated instead of coming back from school in the middle of the semester. Especially he didn't see why Mark had to come back just as people were speaking of him and Anne Marlin as "Jimmy and Anne," collectively, like "Ham and Eggs," or "Scotch and Soda."

And now, Jimmy decided dismally, they weren't speaking of him and Anne at all, and furthermore, if anyone did speak of them, they probably spoke as they did when mentioning Stalin and Hitler, or MacArthur and Yamashita—in other words, not collectively at all, but definitely at cross purposes.

Here, in the first paragraph, we are introduced to the hero and promised that things will happen to him. In the second paragraph we meet the heroine and Jimmy's rival. In the third, the fact that Jimmy and Anne are "definitely at cross purposes" because of Mark is hammered home with interesting, timely parallels. Naturally we are

intrigued to find out what's going to happen to these people.

Contrast the opening paragraphs of the earlier "*Tomatoes Are Queer Things*":

Jimmy unlocked the door of the office and opened all the windows, then tossed his hat at the rack behind the door. Then he stood in the middle of the room and wondered what to do first. Just any other day he wouldn't have thought about it. He'd have propped his feet on the desk and read the paper, but today they were going to be busy. He and Joe would ride out to the growers and Joe would argue about one cent, or maybe two cents, as if it was all the money in the world, and Jimmy would listen and soak up the talk and see some real applied psychology, although Joe wouldn't have called it that. He'd have said you just have to think fast to get ahead of the crooks in the fruit game, meanwhile cheerfully admitting that he was as big a crook as any of them.

One cent—or two cents, didn't mean anything. But if you get five thousand boxes of tomatoes for twelve instead of thirteen cents—then it made a difference. That was what all the jawing was always about—a thousand this or ten thousand that, and Jimmy had worked for Joe too long now to think that ten tons of watermelons or twenty thousand boxes of tomatoes was any great amount. When you had seen two hundred and fifty-two cars of apples loaded seven hundred and fifty boxes to a car you stopped thinking about anything so small as a few thousand peaches or tomatoes. At least Jimmy never seemed to worry about it.

In this static first draft we had a lot of excellent color—but nothing had happened, and there was no immediate promise of anything happening to anyone about whom we cared. Jimmy and Joe and the fruit business sounded kind of dull. Notice how Steve McNeil switched his emphasis to human *conflict* in his new opening. How much more effective than the price of tomatoes is this immediate introduction of Jimmy's problem concerning Anne and Mark! And the two solid paragraphs of stage setting from the original were confined

to simply "*fruit row, between the big warehouses*" and "*Takima Valley*" in the new version.

But let's go on with "*Jimmy Buys Some Toms*" and see how neatly Steve McNeil improved on my suggestions.

Following the opening quoted, we find Jimmy reflecting on the days when he and Anne had had fun, and remembering their last fight, too, in which she had said: "*You're so—so elemental—like a runaway truck. That's it! A truck. Conservative until you find something in your way, then you want to run it down.*" She had said that when Jimmy, one night, was going to explore Mark Darrah's physiognomy with his fists. Jimmy also bitterly reflects that Anne hadn't considered his brother Joe very conservative when he started the Adams Fruit Company on a shoe string; she hadn't mentioned that Jimmy and Joe were elemental or like runaway trucks when she went to work for them. Instead, she had said: "*We'll show that bunch of bums from Consolidated how to run a fruit and vegetable business.*" All that, however, had been before Mark Darrah. And now she was practically a part of "that bunch of bums from Consolidated," inasmuch as Mark's father was Consolidated.

Notice how McNeil employed the conservatism theme; how he used my prosaic suggestion that "Anne considers Jimmy a stick-in-the-mud" as a springboard to his clever "elemental like a runaway truck;" how he neatly got Anne right into the thick of things this time by having her working for Brother Joe and now practically "trading with the enemy" by encouraging Mark Darrah's attentions.

Jimmy's mood isn't improved when Anne comes to work, riding in a long black roadster with Mark Darrah. When she enters, Jimmy grumpily remarks that they had had a date the previous evening, and that when he had arrived, he had learned she was out with Mark. Anne says: "You did say you were coming over, but you didn't say when—so when Mark called . . ." The telephone call from Joe, announcing that he's to have an immediate appendectomy, interrupts their budding quarrel. Joe orders Jimmy

to take over; warns him, "Don't get stuck." At this point Steve McNeil gets in most of those two paragraphs with which he had opened the original version of the story. Now we're sufficiently interested in the characters to appreciate the importance of the price of tomatoes in their lives. Now this background detail is necessary, is properly integrated and implements both our plot and our theme.

**R**EMEMBER my telling Steve in the revision letter, "*Perhaps the girl innocently says something that causes her to invest so heavily in toms.*" Here's how he used it:

Jimmy thought a moment and then said: "I wish I knew what to do about tomatoes."

"Mark told me they're going to lay off over at United," Anne said. "He said everyone'll load up on them and the price will be bad."

Jimmy turned on her. "Oh, he did, did he? When did he get to be a prophet? I suppose he told you whether it would rain, too?"

Anne lifted her head and said archly, "He had an idea it wouldn't." "Bright boy," Jimmy said.

"Well, anyway," Anne said, "I never heard him worrying about getting stuck on a deal, and I never heard him wondering what to do about tomatoes."

"Sure," Jimmy said. "And you never heard of his Dad getting appendicitis on Saturday morning, either. Besides, if Joe and I had the bankroll those bums have, we wouldn't be worrying about getting stuck."

"Maybe if you worried less about getting stuck you'd have more of a bankroll."

"Huh!" Jimmy said. "I bet Mark Darrah said that."

"All right," Anne said. "Don't get stuck. And don't make any money, either. Just be careful."

Whereupon Jimmy goes out, broods over what Anne has said in anger, fails to realize that he practically asked for it. He sniffs, and decides it's going to rain, not particularly because of what his nose tells him, but

*because Anne had implied that Mark didn't think it was going to rain.* A perfectly logical, natural conclusion, which most readers would have reached under similar circumstances! Much more convincingly and sympathetically motivated now than in the original version where Jimmy wish-thinks himself into that opinion by dreaming of putting over a fast one on Mark.

Jimmy fights out his problem for two interesting, suspensive pages. It was easy enough to be a big shot when you had the dough behind you that Darrah had. He and Joe had to think fast. One bum deal would put them so far behind they'd never catch up. You couldn't take chances when you were running on a shoe string. *Maybe if they worried less about getting stuck,*" Anne had said. . . . Suppose it did rain so they couldn't pick tomorrow, and he had ten thousand toms in the warehouse, and everyone sold out on Saturday night? Those truckers would be wanting to load up Sunday night—he could get twenty cents, easy. And if it didn't rain! Jimmy shuddered when he thought of what Joe would say if Jimmy got stuck with a flock of toms. "*Don't get stuck—don't make any money, either,*" Anne had said. Jimmy realizes he's toying with dynamite. "Shut up!" he tells himself. "Don't go getting wise. Don't try to outguess these guys. Just go out there and buy a few toms and pears and a couple tons of prunes and maybe five or six tons of watermelons and forget about being smarter than the rest. If it was going to rain, they'd know it, too. . . ."

When he returns from his buying expedition, Anne is standing inside the warehouse, looking at ten thousand boxes of tomatoes. Our Lochinvar returneth to lay the pelt of the dragon he hath slain at the feet of his Lady Fair. And she welcometh him—like this:

"Where," she asked, "did these things come from?"

"I bought 'em."

"And now that you have them," she asked, "what are you going to do with them?"

"Sell 'em."

"That's wonderful," Anne said. "I thought you were going to make tomato juice out of them."

"Very funny."

"Jimmy," Anne said, "why ten thousand? Everyone's going to buy tomorrow. There'll be lots of tomatoes. You'll be stuck with half of these."

"If it doesn't rain," Jimmy said.

"Rain! Does it look like rain? Jimmy Adams, you're crazy. If Joe knew about this he'd die! You can't afford to get stuck with all these toms."

What she had said was true. It was so true that Jimmy didn't want to be reminded of it, and he didn't want Anne, who was indirectly responsible for his buying ten thousand tomatoes, to be the one to tell him that he had been wrong. He scratched his head and looked at the tomatoes, reflecting that women were complex mechanisms. This morning she had been needling him because he was conservative. Now she was giving him hell because he had proved that he wasn't.

In this dialogue Steve McNeil adeptly used a trite and obvious gag to advance his plot. Lives there a male who hasn't squirmed, like Jimmy Adams, at woman's inconsistency—or a female who hasn't enjoyed the male discomfiture when she's exercised her prerogative to change her mind? By appealing to the reader's own experience, the author gets both humor and sympathy for Jimmy. The fact that the argument concerns tomatoes and is motivated by the conservatism theme gives this "woman's inconsistency" device a fresh, interesting flavor.

To proceed with the story, Jimmy gets in deeper at this point by asking, "I suppose Mark came over to take you to lunch and saw all those tomatoes?" To which Anne nods affirmatively; adds that Mark said Joe should have known better than to leave Jimmy in charge, and that she agreed with Mark on that. "Why doesn't that guy stay over across the street where he belongs?" Jimmy snaps. "And if you think he's right, why aren't you over there with him?" To which Anne retorts, "Maybe I will be!" and walks out.

Jimmy now glumly reviews the day's ac-

complishments. He had made Anne sore at him, and had, because he was sore, bought ten thousand boxes of tomatoes, and if it didn't rain tomorrow so that they couldn't pick, he'd have put Joe in an awful hole. On his way home he buys a paper, and the weather report says, "Fair and warmer." Jimmy buries himself in the darkness of a movie which brings him no comfort and spends a worrisome night dreaming about Anne and Mark and tomatoes. . . .

Through his protagonist's review of his predicament, Steve McNeil both develops additional suspense as well as makes sure that the reader realizes this is a crisis: he practically asks the reader, "Now how in hell will Jimmy get out of this?" He has pretty thoroughly convinced us now that it *won't rain*.

But when Jimmy awakes next morning, *it is raining*. This comes as a pleasant surprise. Craftily the author lets us relax for a moment. When Jimmy arrives at the warehouse, four or five truckers are waiting; they ask the price of toms. Here's Jimmy's chance to unload. . . . But he says, "Twenty cents." They say, "You're nuts, kid." Jimmy is worried because they hadn't tried to work the price down a little. He goes into the office, prepared to be casual and cool toward Anne, but she isn't there. With a sinking feeling in his stomach he remembers last night; maybe she has taken him up, gone to work for Consolidated. More suspense here. A little later she arrives, explains she's been to the hospital to see Joe. "You tell him about the tomatoes?" Jimmy asks. "And have him burst a blood vessel?" she replies. "Certainly not."

The suspension begins to form in Jimmy's mind that maybe Anne had *deliberately* goaded him into buying those toms at Mark's suggestion. He fights the idea; she wouldn't do a thing like that. But, then, he has no way of knowing how far things have progressed between Anne and Mark. He snaps at Anne, "Mark's be tickled to death to get us out on a limb, wouldn't he?" Anne naturally defends Mark, which doesn't help Jimmy's peace of mind.

Jimmy goes out; finds Eddie Rossetti, a trucker, waiting for him. "I'm just giving you a little tip," says Eddie. "If you've got any toms, better unload. Consolidated's lousy with 'em. They're asking sixteen cents and we're laughin' at 'em. The price'll break to fourteen before the afternoon is over." Jimmy grins; this is good news, because Eddie had taken the trouble to come around with such obvious monkey business. Four or five truckers are hanging around, waiting to see how Eddie makes out. Jimmy sticks to twenty cents.

Now the reader begins to feel that perhaps Jimmy is dumb—like a fox. Things are beginning to break his way. The tension is easing a bit, and the author isn't quite ready to spring his climax. So he opens a Second Front, like this:

The door opened behind them and Jimmy turned as Mark Darrah said, "Hello, Beautiful. Ready for lunch?" He glanced at Jimmy and said, "Hello, sucker."

"Listen, you glorified office boy," Jimmy grated, "what do you mean by that crack?"

Mark laughed and jerked his head toward the warehouse. "That's a lot of tomatoes." Then he took Anne's arm and they went out the door. Jimmy watched them get into the car and noticed that Anne said something, angrily, to Mark just before they drove away.

He walked out into the warehouse and wondered why he hadn't punched Mark Darrah in the nose for that crack, and also wondered why he felt more depressed than angry and then he came up with the answer. Mark's "Hello, sucker," coincident with his taking Anne's arm and going out the door with her was almost too prophetic for Jimmy's taste. He might just as well have said, "Well, sucker, there you sit with ten thousand boxes of tomatoes, *just as we planned*, and while you sit and think about this, my girl and I will go out to lunch."

This scene accomplishes several important things. By confirming the suspicion built up earlier that Mark and Anne had deliberately planned Jimmy's downfall, a new

complication is added to the plot, and suspense is revitalized. By having Mark "rub it in" his unsympathetic character is emphasized and the groundwork laid for Mark to overplay his hand in the climax to come. And by letting Jimmy notice, without realizing the significance of it, that "Anne said something angrily to Mark, the author deftly plants justification for Anne's "about-face" at the end. With Anne and Mark shoved off-stage, Steve McNeil can now set the scenery for his big crisis.

Jimmy momentarily considers unloading at any price; then his judgment tells him the rain means a better price for anyone who has toms. He decides to wait until 3 o'clock before breaking. Dave Costello, a friend of Joe's, but now working for Consolidated, comes over. "We heard you got a lot of toms, so they sent me over to see if we couldn't maybe take some off your hands," Dave announces. This has all the earmarks of Nazis bearing gifts. So Jimmy says, "Twenty cents." Dave leaves to tell them.

Suddenly it hits Jimmy. Suppose Consolidated was loading a couple of cars of tomatoes. Suppose they had sold some for about sixteen cents, figuring to pick them up today. Now it was raining and their cars weren't loading, yet they had to deliver. Jimmy plays the hunch; when Mark returns with Anne, he says:

"Say, Mark, Costello was over to get those toms you're short."

Mark, without thinking, said, "Oh, he was? Why that's—" Then he realized what he was saying and blurted, "What toms we're short? We're not short any toms!"

Jimmy grinned at him. "Aren't you?" he asked, and walked back into the warehouse. When Anne came in he said, "Glamour-puss seemed upset about something, didn't he?"

"Jimmy," Anne said, "I think they are short and if you just wait—"

"You're coming in on our side a little late, aren't you? I'm sure they're short and I'm gonna wait, all right."

Anne looked at him for a moment, her hand came up to her mouth in a



childish gesture, almost as if Jimmy had struck her, and the tears came to her eyes. Then she said, "You fool! You big, stubborn fool!" and ran back into the office.

The truckers come back and try to beat down the price; Jimmy continues to hold out. Eventually he goes into the office to find Anne crying; he succeeds only in making matters worse with his clumsy efforts to apologize. Mark walks in on this scene; possessively demands, "What's the idea of making Anne cry?"

The tide has now obviously turned in Jimmy's favor on the Tomato Front, but it's likely to be a pyrrhic victory. He has bungled things beyond repair with Anne. The author is now ready to explode his carefully prepared climax.

Jimmy snapped, "What's it to you?" and then had another idea. "Listen, what are you doing over here, anyway? I don't remember telling you that you'd be welcome."

"I'm buying tomatoes!"

Jimmy was so mad that he yelled, "Beat it! We haven't any!"

Mark's mouth dropped open, his face turned red. "Haven't any? You got ten thousand boxes out there."

"Sure we have," Jimmy nodded. "And to you—they're twenty-two cents a box."

Mark yelled, "Why, you two-bit chiseler! Just because you and that cheapskate brother of yours got a nickel together and bought a few tomatoes, do you think you can put the squeeze on us?"

Jimmy went around the corner of the desk, intending to rectify that matter of Mark's unbroken nose, but Anne was ahead of him. She walked to Mark and said, "You shut up! What do you mean, 'Two-bit chiseler?' If you burns over at Consolidated had to use brains

instead of a bankroll, you'd starve to death. If you want our tomatoes, go ahead and buy them. If you don't get out of here. Personally, I'm a little sick of bigshots!"

It was all over now except for the clinch. The theme is tied into the climax, when Anne admits, "Jimmy—don't try to be a bigshot. Those ten thousand toms! That was too close. I prayed for rain all night Saturday. Just be good old conservative Jimmy with the broken nose. I hate handsome men!"

**I**N this new version of *Jimmy Buys Some Toms* every bit of action, characterization, and dialogue were directly related to the fruit-brokerage background from which they sprang, and were both informative and entertaining. It was a safe bet that this story would sell—if not to be *Post*, then certainly to one of the other top-line markets. I dictated a note that afternoon to Mr. Erd Brandt of *Saturday Evening Post* along with the manuscript, mentioning a bit about the author, since this was the first McNeil script we'd sent there. And on April 30th, I sent Steve a telegram:

CONGRATULATIONS, TOMATOES SOLD TO  
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

\* \* \*

I'm afraid this is anti-climatic, but necessary. Steve McNeil hasn't written any new stories since this one; I last heard from him a couple of months ago—and from where is none of Hitler's business! I answer his letters in care of a postmaster at an embarkation point. Another good author the editors wont be buying from for a while. But there'll come a day when you'll see him again in the *Post* and *Cosmopolitan*. Steve assures me he's going to have plenty to write about besides Oregon and Washington when he gets back.

# Tomorrow Is Too Late

By ROBERT NORMAN HUBNER

"JUST start to fly; you'll find you've wings!"

I started thirty times. I wrote the opening for the first chapter thirty times and each time I discarded it. The thirty-first try was successful, but when the book was finished, Chapter One became Chapter Eight!

At first, the purported chapter sequences seemed to have no relation one to the other. After a while they began to have a slight relation. A continuity began to grow, but I had a lot of things I wanted my characters to say, and they said them, but it didn't have much to do with the rest of the story. By the time I finished the first draft of the manuscript—60,000 words—I had about the craziest document of disjointed action and conversation that a normal individual ever conceived. I let the manager of the leading bookshop in San Francisco read it.

"What do you think of it?" I said.

"It's screwy," he said. "But it's good. I'd like to see you work it over and put a continuity into it. If you can."

Five months after I put the first uncertain word on paper I had a completed manuscript. I named it "*The Fabulous People*"—a title I had chosen from the beginning—and sent it to a New York agent.

Three weeks and six hours later I received a note: "We were much entertained by '*The Fabulous People*' and we will try to place it for you."

One publisher turned it down because he had just purchased a similar novel. The agent then sent it to Mr. Knopf. He bought it and rejoiced.

It all sounds very simple, doesn't it? And, really, it wasn't very difficult.

The most difficult part about writing a novel, at least for me, was to sit down to write it.

I AM a newspaperman, and that's both a good and a bad beginning. Although a newspaperman has the opportunity of viewing from an intimate vantage the curious phenomena of the intercourse of men and nations, he nevertheless is a knight-errant in a fast-moving cavalcade where no one sits down for more than twenty minutes at a time.

The most difficult task, therefore, in the writing of a novel by a newspaperman, is to regulate his thinking so as to get away from the news story that he knocks out in fifteen or twenty minutes and to apply himself to the broader scope of a story that begins TODAY and ends five or six or ten months from now.

It's difficult. Lord, I know just how difficult it is!

"I don't have the time," newspapermen say. I said it, too. "I have to earn a living. Who's going to pay my bills while I write a novel?" But I repeat: Writing the novel is the easiest part of it. It's getting down to write it that's the hard job. I wrote mine while earning a living—and, too, when I should have been earning a living—and I found that there is only one really important thing that is required for writing a novel and that is the determination to write it.

For newspapermen who have to write news stories under all and any circumstances, surely the writing of a novel under the stress of a purely economic situation is not so great a task that it should remain untackled.

I have no sympathy for newspapermen who don't write their news stories, and likewise I have none for those who don't write their novels. If a man really wants to write a novel, no height nor depth nor avalanche nor any creature that walketh or leapeth or swimmeth in the sea should stop him.

I started writing my first novel, "*The Fabulous People*," in the summer of 1941. I had thirteen years of newspaper experience behind me, enough to write a dozen novels. I had covered police for the Sacramento *Union*, Sacramento, California, and one of my first jobs was to report the details of a double hanging which I witnessed at Folsom Prison. Gruesome, but excellent experience for the writing mind. Subsequently, I covered six murders, seventeen suicides, innumerable swindlings, robberies, arson and rapings. (Sacramento is a violent town.)

Then I went to San Francisco and covered the waterfront for three years for the San Francisco *News*, the Scripps-Howard journal. I wrote a daily ship-news column, so I met all the boats that came to town. I observed, interviewed and became friendly with every, imaginable person from every imaginable place in the world.

During this time I made a five-months trip to South America on behalf of the *News* and sent in a daily column by mail. Then the paper put me to work on the Federal Courts, where I became acquainted with dope-fiends, judges and various criminals awaiting deportation. Then to the state courts, City Hall, more police and finally general assignment.

After ten years of this on three California newspapers I saved up enough money to make a trip to the Orient. In Tokyo I worked for a year, six months as Sunday Editor for the *Japan Times* (an English-language daily now merged with the *Advertiser*) and six months as a publicity writer for the then-forthcoming Tokyo World's Fair of 1940.

It was this Japan experience that really made me want to write a book. Day in and day out I observed the fabulous characters from all ends of the earth as they paraded through the Imperial Hotel—diamond merchants from Amsterdam, a princess from the South Seas, a Mongolian war lord, a Tibetan lama, rug merchants from Persia, newspapermen from New York, sheiks from Arabia, traders from the Indies, diplomats, adventurers, fliers for Chiang Kai-shek, soldiers of fortune, expatriates, sumurai, Japanese Thought Policemen, spies, refu-

gees and geisha girls.

I remember a *Reuters'* correspondent who once said, after interviewing the Sheriff of Yemen and his bejewelled retinue: "Working in Tokyo is like being in the middle of an Arabian Nights tale. The people in this town are fabulous, absolutely fabulous!"

The *Fabulous People*! What a wonderful title. Some day I'll write a book about these people, but just when?—I didn't have the slightest idea.

When things began to get too difficult for me in the Orient, what with the Tokyo fair being cancelled and the *Times* merging with the *Advertiser*, I returned to San Francisco and went to work for the 1940 Golden Gate International Exposition, later for the San Francisco *Examiner* as a rewrite man.

It was while I was working on the *Examiner* that I ran across a few lines about writing a novel. It was in a magazine. I don't remember the name of it. I think it was an *Elks Magazine*.

I lately had been straining on the leash to start work on the book, but I never quite could get around to it. But when I glanced casually at the lines and read the words: "Tomorrow is too far away to write a novel in"—so curiously ended with a preposition—that was the spark that set me off like a keg of dynamite.

I dashed off my final batch of rewrite copy for the paper, leaped into a taxi, was speeded home—to my old studio room on Sacramento Street—and without even stopping to take off my hat and coat, I lit a cigarette, flipped a sheet of paper into my somewhat battered and archaic L. C. Smith and wrote: "*The Fabulous People*—Chapter One." Then I sat there for one hour smoking and looking at the blank paper. Finally I started writing about some of the people I had met around the Imperial Hotel. I fictionized certain people that I knew, and as the story grew (in volume but not in continuity) the people took on functions and characteristics that they never had in real life. Sometimes composites of two or more real people grew into a single character, and before long I was creating entirely new characters. By the

time I was one-fourth way through the book I was writing pure fiction, with an authentic Japanese background.

This was in 1941, the summer before the Pearl Harbor incident. The fact that the story had a Japanese background would mean little or nothing in its prospective sales value.

Well, I worked and I worked, then I lost my job on the *Examiner*, laid off temporarily. I paid a few bills, and with twenty dollars that I had left, I sat down to finish the book, come what may.

Presently my landlord knocked on the door.

"It's a nice day," he said coyly.

"Beautiful," I said.

He grew less cordial as time went on. I offered to cut him in on the royalties of the book, if any, but he only snickered at me. Finally he got out of hand, as did several other people. So when the *Examiner* called me up one day and offered to put me to work again I thought I better take the job in order to restore peace in the neighborhood. By that time the novel was far enough along and I had grown so interested in what I was doing that I worked on it every spare moment I could muster. Most of the work was done during the evenings and week-ends and during a two-weeks vacation period, through which I worked day and night and made the final revision that placed all the incidents and characters where I wanted them.

When, at last, I typed "THE END" on the 351st page of a 70,000-word manuscript, I leaped up and kicked over a small table with a dictionary on it. I shouted as loud as I could that the novel was finished and a Russian sculptor dashed in from the next studio, thinking there was something wrong with me. He couldn't understand English, so I threw open my window and shouted down to a conductor who was riding by on the Sacramento cable car: "Finished! I just finished it. The Fabulous People. Do you hear me?"

He looked at me with indulgence and smiled slightly.

When the novel came out in print last June under the imprint of Mr. Knopf's *Borzoj Books*, I had enough time to reflect

on just what had gone into that book that had made Mr. Knopf describe it in a letter to me as "absolutely brilliant."

In the first place, as I have tried to point out, I wrote it without any preconceived idea of what a novel should be. I think this is a good idea for all beginning creative writers. While you're learning how to write—on a newspaper or elsewhere, for most of us must learn; only a few are gifted—learn also what a novel is, but don't restrict yourself by it. Learn that a novel is a little world all its own, that it must function as a work of art and literature, and that it is best to have an idea, something tangible to say, at least a theme, but try to shed any encumbering thoughts as to what might or might not be good novel form. The novel isn't the same thing today that it was twenty years ago, or even ten or five. If you have something worth while saying, the only limitations should be the two paste-board covers.

Secondly, I learned that in doing purely creative work on "*The Fabulous People*," I was doing my best work. The passages and characters I drew purely from my imagination are by far the best, according to various comments and criticism I have received. I mention this because my book started out, like many first novels, to be autobiographical. In the purely imaginative you draw upon the distilled thought and action, divorced from any personal influence which often causes writers—including myself—to put non-essential material into their works, mostly from sentimental or egotistical reasons.

"*The Fabulous People*," according to Mr. Knopf, is "an unusual" and an "extraordinary" novel, but not an experimental one. Compared to a novel that has one running story from beginning to end and a hero or heroine who carries the burden of the plot, "*The Fabulous People*" never would coincide. It was described by one critic as "a pinwheel which goes off in all directions to burst in the end into values that make up a surprisingly beautiful and definite pattern."

The book was built with a montage of visual descriptions and moods through which ran five or six stories involving fifteen

or twenty people. Some of the characters crossed each others' paths and some characters never met at all, but they were all finally held together in continuity by the First Person I, who was the narrator of the novel. This montage of action and imagery was laid like little cut-out pieces of colored silk on the dark background of wartime Japan and the seething, restless millions of the Far East so that by the time the last piece of silk was laid in place the montage bloomed forth as a complete picture that functioned in every detail.

What other writers use or have used this montage effect I don't know. Doubtless many. But it was a revelation to me. I learned to write a novel by writing one and I learned a method that is free and away and one that caused a number of noted critics to shout with glee (and a few to mumble in their beards, for you can't please them all). Nine-tenths of the press comment was highly favorable.

My only suggestion is: "Just start to fly; you'll find you've wings!"

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#### Trade Journalists

Sir:

Because writers, like everyone else, are joining the Army and Navy, getting full-time jobs in defense plants and devoting time to Civilian Defense, we can use correspondents in St. Louis, Portland, Ore., Seattle, Denver, Buffalo, Rochester, N. Y., Utica, N. Y., Springfield, Mass., and several other cities.

The work consists of news reporting and features for trade papers. Payment on commission soon after publication.

RICHARD CARL STANTON,  
P. O. Box 892,  
Binghamton, N. Y.

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#### Reprint Sheet

Sir:

*The National Digest* is a journal devoted to the ideals, events and opinions which go to make up the background of modern living. Included in the contents of *National Digest* are reprints of articles of unusual character, and also staff-written contributions.

JUNE N. SAFIR,  
*National Digest*,  
5528 West Oxford Street,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

#### SIR! is a monthly

Sir:

*SIR! Magazine* is traveling on now as a monthly and moving at a right smart clip. We have been getting some big-name copy but generally we are holding to our original policy of buying by quality and to hell with who wrote it.

Our market is wide open. We never have sufficient good copy on hand, and we are constantly making last-minute calls to the agents for material with which to close our issues. At present, our rates have a 1c minimum and a \$50 top per story. Thirty-five hundred to 4,000 is our top length, and we like our copy smart, solid, and in the groove.

We are using every type of material, and as we said before, we don't care who wrote it so long as it reads well.

Two suggestions to new writers trying to break in are:

Pan the ladies. We usually tee off on the female sex in each issue, good naturedly of course, and with facts to back up our statements. Of course, we are a broadminded bunch and if the gals want to come back at the men we have a spot for them too.

Secondly, we like controversial pieces; articles that will get us publicity pick-ups.

Reports are quick, payment 30 days after acceptance. *SIR!* is running monthly and regularly and we need copy.

ABNER J. SUNDELL, *Editor*,  
103 Park Avenue, New York City.

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#### Hey Frank!

Sir:

You may be interested to learn that I sold my first story, "Bittersweet," a *DIGEST* Contest flop, to *Chicago Daily News*. I was.

Here's a vote for more longer length features like "The Summing Up" and the Putman autobiog. And more Gruber.

The *DIGEST* is tops with me.

K. GREENE,  
930 Madison Ave.,  
Reading, Pa.

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Sir:

With reference to the novel competition we are conducting, I desire to inform you that we have discontinued temporarily this competition until such time as the manuscripts we have on hand are carefully examined and cleared.

WILLIAM J. JONES, *Acting Editor*,  
*American Sunday-School Union*,  
1816 Chestnut Street,  
Philadelphia, Pa.



# Bye-Bye Ballistics

By JULIUS LONG

**F**IREARMS are overwhelmingly popular in our trade, which is acutely unaware of the danger of their careless handling.

Many are the dodges employed to convince the detective and mystery fiction reader that the writer is not only familiar with firearms but possessed of a higher learning unavailable to the lay mind. The devotees of each dodge may be classed into several distinct and interesting schools.

None in America enjoys a greater enrollment than The School of the Burnt Cordite Sniffers. Sooner or later one of their characters walks into a room in which a gun has been fired and sniffs burnt cordite. The reader is thus assured that the author is vastly better educated in the science of ballistics than the mere hack whose characters can smell nothing better than burnt powder.

Cordite is a British smokeless powder with a nitroglycerin base. It is never used as a propellant by American manufacturers, who use a nitro-cellulose powder. If American mystery stories are to be our guide, our American powder is piteously inferior to Cordite, which, despite the reputed need for powder in Britain, is imported in large quantities so that the characters of mystery fiction may walk into rooms and sniff it at will.

Close on the heels of the burnt cordite sniffers is the enrollment of the cupro-nickel school. Everybody knows that automatic pistol bullets are jacketed with metal to facilitate their feeding into the chamber, but the cupro-nickel boys go farther and give us the name of the exact metal used. Of course our American manufacturers of pistol cartridges have long since abandoned the cupro-nickel jacket in favor of other alloys, but among American mystery writers

it's still cupro-nickel, two-to-one.

In the Ivy and snootier league we find The Powder-mark School, whose experts are so proficient as to be able to tell at a glance from the presence or absence of powder marks whether a homicide could have been a suicide. This is truly a marvelous feat of detection, as cartridges will throw powder anywhere from three feet to only three inches, depending on the ammunition and the gun.

Should the experts of the powder-mark school be forgiven, when they talk of powder marks, if they may mean scorching, or blackening? How are they to know there's a difference?

It would be difficult to enumerate all the schools of authors who employ miscellaneous devices to give themselves expert standing. In a recently printed yarn, for example, the heroine pulled a gun on the hero and "expertly jacked a cartridge into the chamber." That is, she covered her man with an empty gun, then loaded it! What was the hero supposed to be doing, admiring her expertness?

The internal evidence of the above mentioned document reveals that its author had made the amazing discovery that an automatic pistol is loaded by pulling back the slide, then releasing same, whereupon a spring brings it violently forward, goosing the cartridge into its lethal position. So he had to get across the fact that he had acquired this information, even at the cost of insulting the intelligence of anyone who has ever had a hand on an automatic.

Then there was the story in a recent issue of a national weekly in which all the characters were pictured as gun experts. The murder was accomplished with a .380 Colt automatic pistol. Suspicion was directed to a character from whose .38 Colt automatic

a cartridge was missing. Overlooking the fact that few owners of automatics, out of respect for the magazine spring, keep their magazines fully loaded, there is the simple fact that it is impossible to fit a .38 automatic cartridge into a .380 automatic.

Later in the same story the gun experts pass around a Luger pistol and are considerably astounded when it goes off upon application of pressure to the trigger. Not one of the experts suspected that it was loaded, though all Lugers have indicators on top easily visible to anyone capable of counting the fingers on his hands.

Thus far this piece has been packed with criticism of a nature which moralists would leap to classify as destructive. By way of constructive comment two suggestions are offered. One way for the writer of detective and mystery fiction to avoid betrayal of an ignorance of firearms would be to eradicate the ignorance itself.

This desirable end may be attained by a study of firearms and their literature. Unfortunately this involves considerable time and expense. For the duration small arms and ammunition are not manufactured for civilian consumption. Moreover, it is the practice of many restless state legislators to disarm their constituents, and in such states small arms are to be found only in the hands of the constabulary and the outlaws.

If anyone is seriously interested, there is extant a volume entitled "*Textbook of Firearms Identification, Investigation & Evidence*," by Brig. Gen. J. S. Hatcher, U. S. Army, published by *The Small-Arms Publishing Co.*, price \$7.50. This volume incorporates the same author's "*Textbook of Pistols and Revolvers*," which offers detailed descriptions of many arms, including the 8 m/m Nambu, the side-arm of the Japanese army. This latter tid-bit should be of considerable interest to the South-Pacific division of the trade, which has thus far controlled itself admirably in the matter of disclosing any information about Jap ordnance.

To the mystery writer with neither the means nor inclination to go the whole hog on the subject, an alternative suggestion is offered. It is simply this: kiss ballistics goodbye. It is possible to pack a murder

mystery with gun play and corpses without even a suggestion of ballistics.

Few modern mystery novels are more readable and fascinating than those of Eric Ambler. The hero of Mr. Ambler's "*Journey Into Fear*" is Graham, an ordnance expert who could be expected to show off his ballistic learning at the drop of a hat. Hats drop many times in the novel, but Graham's reference to the weapons used by and against him is most casual.

After an unsuccessful attempt on his life he permits a minor character to observe that the weapon employed had been a nine millimetre self-loading pistol. Later he refers to the weapon as a large self-loading pistol. Still later he calls it a revolver—of all things—a revolver!

Mr. Ambler is probably well informed with respect to small arms, their care and feeding, but, whatever the case, he betrays no ignorance of the subject. It is noteworthy that he achieves this desirable effect with a minimum of effort and a complete lack of ballistic double-talk.

Admittedly there are stories of crime in which the solution is dependent upon ballistics, others built around some interesting firearm. The uninformed writer should fight shy of such stories. There are millions of unwritten tales of dire doings that require no ballistic lore.

#### Defective Book Blue Print

Sir:

Here are our requirements for *Gargoyle Mysteries*:

1. The novels must involve murder.
2. Length must be 60,000 words or more—preferably not more than 80,000.
3. The novels must contain no remarks such as "Had I but known . . ."
4. The characters must not refer to the fact that something going on would be unbelievable if it appeared in a book. As Harper's Magazine sagely remarks: "When we are reading a book, we know we are reading a book."
5. The reader must be given all necessary information to solve the crime himself.
6. All improbabilities must be logically explained before the end.
7. The novels must contain no coincidences.
8. The murderer must not be insane.
9. The motive for the murder must be plausible. The best motives to use are revenge, passion, avarice, ambition, jealousy, and fear.

10. The best methods of murder are simple methods: shooting, stabbing, poisoning, etc.
11. The novels must be written with the professional skill demonstrated by such top-flight mystery writers as Erle Stanley Gardner, Craig Rice, Leslie Ford, Dorothy B. Hughes, Cleve F. Adams, and Jonathan Latimer in their respective fields: the first two semi-hardboiled, the third quiet, the fourth tinglingly horrible, and the fifth and sixth hardboiled.

COWARD-McCANN, INC.,  
2 West 45th Street,  
New York City.

#### Lonesome Bill?

Sir:

Although most writers are now either in the armed services or in war work of some kind (I'm hitting seven days a week and long hours daily welding pipelines on a new military airport), this Mexican Border country here in Arizona would certainly be a writer's dream of heaven, especially if he wrote Westerns.

Low living costs, friendly people, and such locale as no writer ever dreamed up.

A mile below Douglas is Aqua Prieta, Sonora, where Villa fought it out with Obregon's troops in 1917 and then, beaten, fled back into the desert. He came in for water, food, and loot, and got everything else he hadn't bargained for. The battle lasted 48 hours with American troops stationed at the line on watchful "hands off" duty and slugs drumming all over town.

Tombstone is wonderful. Boot Hill is on a rocky shoulder about a mile north of town—and how the blazes they ever dug graves in that terrain is beyond me. Probably with drills from the mines. They're still arguing out here as to whether or not the four Earp boys and Doc Holiday were wronged lawmen or six shooter hoodlums. Research in the local library here convinces me of the former.

Talked to the grandson of John Slaughter, who took over sheriffing around Tombstone after the Earps were "driven out." Old John really must have been hell-on-wheels to badmen. He died in 1922, in his 80's. His great San Bernardino ranch, 18 miles out of Douglas, has passed into other hands.

If any of the writing gang who read the DIGEST, and who are not in war work, are looking for God's writing country, they'll find it down here around Douglas. The Chamber of Commerce will send them data.

Yep, it's all down here; bull-fights, cock-fights, good beer, history, and the friendliest people on earth. What more does a guy want?

WILLIAM L. HOPSON,  
1033 Seventh St.,  
Douglas, Arizona.

#### Feed Bag

Sir:

What are feed dealers in your "neck of the woods" doing to meet war problems? I am sure that if you will check with your dealers in your community you will find some interesting leads that you can develop into feature articles for *The Feed Bag*.

Many of our regular correspondents are now serving with Uncle Sam. As a result we are running low on good merchandising stories about retail feed dealers. We use them fast and pay promptly—one cent per word (on publication) plus extra compensation for photos.

These features are easy to write. There's a story behind nearly every up-and-coming feed dealer that we will pay you for writing. Due to the war demands for increased food production the feed business is booming all over the country. Drop in for a chat with any "wide-awake" feed man and ask him about his business. Dig around for any unusual merchandising plans that are helping him to sell more feed. What kind of advertising does he use—special selling stunts—feeding demonstrations—direct mail campaigns, etc.? Does he offer any customer services such as poultry diagnosis—free want ads—stock farm tours—free movies—feeding advice? What is he doing about deliveries—machinery maintenance—labor problems?

We are always interested in learning about dealers who operate on a cash basis and there are many other possibilities. Keep your eyes open for clever window displays or the use of live animals—any unusual promotions on the war effort dealing with war bonds and stamps, Red Cross, community drives, etc. Ask about special stunts and contests, methods of collecting old accounts, new equipment, souvenirs, profitable sidelines.

Your article has a better chance for acceptance if it is accompanied by good clear photos or snapshots. These should include the owner or manager of the plant, the exterior of the plant itself, if possible some good inside shots showing the machinery or displays, or any other photos that will serve to illustrate the special phase of the business you are writing about.

The Feed Bag,

C. L. ONSGARD, Editor,  
*The Feed Bag*,  
741 North Milwaukee Street,  
Milwaukee, Wis.

Dear Sir:

As President of the Reid Writers Club of Chicago, I should like to announce our new meeting place. It has been changed to Room 905, 111 W. Jackson, Chicago, Ill. Those desirous of joining this group of hard-working writers, write me at the above address.

HAROLD STOAKES,  
Reid Writers Club.

## New York Market Letter

(Continued from page 27)

Hunting and fishing are all much nearer home. New guns and fishing reels are scarce, so articles tell how to care for what one has. More attention is paid to ideas for keeping the sporting interests alive, and for things to take the place of former activities, such as sportsmen's clubs, game preserves, etc. The point of view is very positive and constructive. There is more how-to-do material used now. But whatever the subject, it is important that the writer be an expert in his line. Pictures are important, but must be especially adapted to the subject, and story-telling. Lengths should run not over 3,000 words; preferably 2,000. Rarely, a piece of fiction fits in if it is exceptionally well done and appropriate in theme. But here again, the writer must be sure that details are entirely authentic. Rates of payment are reported to be the best in the outdoor field. Subjects handled by the regular departments are not wanted from other writers. But outside of this restriction, new writers find a friendly welcome.

**R**OSE WYN tells me that she needs as much material as ever. Especially on the confession magazine *Secrets*, she wants more stories. Keep in touch with current issues, for the confession field in general seems to be shifting these days. But a study of the magazine will help any contributor. The lengths remain the same: 5,000 to 6,000 for shorts, 15,000 for novels, and a special need for 2,500-worders, which pay \$50 each. Dramatic Turning Point stories of 300 to 700 words are needed, and there is always an opening for short articles and fillers on interesting phases of courtship and marriage problems. These last are wanted in both *Secrets* and the four romantic love books which Mrs. Wyn edits. Reports are faster than ever. Address—67 West 44th Street.

On the men's pulps of the Ace group, policies run along the same channels. The editors would like more human interest in the plots. Lengths are from 1,000 to 5,000

words for shorts, to 10,000 words for novellets. In general, stories should be abreast of the times in the sports books. New writers are wanted, and a lot of new writers sell here each year. Maurice J. Phillips is managing editor of *Ten-Detective Aces*, *Ace Sports*, *12 Sports Aces*. Ruth Dreyer is managing editor of *10 Story Detective*, *Western Aces*, *Western Trails*. *Ten-Detective Aces* pays a cent a word, the others a half cent and up. Address—67 West 44th Street.

Hugh Layne reports that decisions on manuscripts for the five fact-detective magazines he edits for Hillman Publications are speeding up, and are usually made in less than a week. He uses about seventy stories a month, which is a lot of material. Requirements remain the same as in the past. Payment is a cent and a half per word, and up, on acceptance. Payment is made on publication for the pictures used, at \$3 and up. Address—1476 Broadway.

For the Red Circle pulps, the editor says that he needs Western novels of from 30,000 to 40,000 words, particularly. He also has a special need for novels for *Complete War Novels*. In both cases, he wants to talk over the idea first with the author, although he is glad to see completed manuscripts, too. Manuscripts, intended for book publication, might find magazine publication here first. There are no restrictions, except moral ones. Payment is half a cent a word, on acceptance. Editor—Robert Erisman. Address—330 W. 42nd Street.

**L**EO MARGULIES, editorial director of the Thrilling group, always needs to see stories flowing in and new people submitting material. Right now he needs especially Westerns, and shorts for all the books. *Exciting Mystery* needs stories of the underground movements in various countries. Heroes need not necessarily be American, but an American must be involved in some way, to give the Yankee touch. There is a need for some 25,000-word novels for the love magazines. *Exciting Detective* needs 30,000-word novels. This magazine no longer uses a lead serial, and this 30,000-word length is open to all able writers. *Rodeo Romances* doesn't get as much ma-

terial as it needs. Remember, stories may be of any phase of rodeo business in the real Southwest or West. They don't need to pertain directly to the rodeo shows, but might be about raising horses for use in rodeos, for example. There must be some rodeo connection in the story, and there must be heavy romantic interest in the plot. Either the man's or girl's viewpoint is suitable. All the detective magazines need shorts of about 5,000 words. Also novelettes averaging 15,000 words, though the range for detective novelettes is from 10,000 to 20,000 words. If you want to write sports stories, you should familiarize yourself with the playing rules, and know the exact regulations of your game. Right now, the need is mostly for baseball issues. But stories about every sort of minor sport in the 5,000-word length are much in demand. A borderline story about softball, hockey, track, bowling, soccer, etc., might be acceptable, where only the best of the major sports tales win acceptance because of the competition. The more variety in these sports shorts, the better pleased the editors will be. Address of the Thrilling Group—10 East 40th St.

David A. Balch, managing editor of Charles Henry Publications, announces that *Digest and Review* has resumed publication, but buys nothing from outside. F. L. Nelson is editor. *Successful Living* needs articles on health, diet, exercise, handicap stories, self-improvement, etc., all with a self-improvement or inspirational theme. Fiction is particularly desired, in lengths up to 3,500 words. Stories may be love and romance, adventure, anything with strong emotional appeal. Nothing sordid or unhappy, but all keyed to a note of hope. Articles should run from 800 to 2,000 words. Payment is a half cent per word, on publication. Address—683 Broadway. And your Aunt Harriet wishes you all a very pleasant Xmas.

Sir:

Received today "*The Writer's Market*," 10th Edition. You have done a splendid job in a refreshingly different way. Thanks sincerely for this selling help.

S. L. BREVIT,  
1763 21st Avenue,  
San Francisco, Calif.

#### Joyce Horner Wins

Sir:

A \$400 prize, offered for the best novel written by a student attending a writers' conference during the current year, was won by Joyce Horner, a member of the University of New Hampshire's fifth annual Writers' Conference held here last summer. The award is made annually by *Curtis, Brown, Ltd.*, literary agents, and *Doubleday Doran*, publishers.

Miss Horner, a teacher at Hood College in Maryland, first attended the New Hampshire Writers' Conference in the summer of 1941, at which time she discussed plans for the book with staff members. When she returned to the 1942 Conference with her book, completed during the winter, authors Esther Forbes and Millen Brand, members of the New Hampshire staff, assisted her with criticism.

Another student member of the 1942 summer Writers' Conference, was Arthur Gordan of Brooklyn, N. Y.

CARROLL S. TOWLE,  
University of New Hampshire.

An anthology to be known as *War Poems of the United Nations* is being prepared for the Dial Press by the League of American Writers. Joy Davidman, whose volume of poems, "*Letter To A Comrade*," was published in the Yale Series of Younger Poets in 1938, will edit the volume for the National Board of the writers organization.

Already invitations to contribute to the anthology have been forwarded to leading poets and writers organizations throughout the United Nations and the work of translating Russian and Spanish language poems into English is already well under way.

At the same time announcement of this project was made, an invitation was issued to all American poets to contribute to the anthology such of their work as they believed useful to the war effort. Full particulars about the anthology are available in a prospectus obtainable at the offices of the League of American Writers, 13 Astor Place, New York City.

(This is the Dasheill Hammett, Donald Ogden Stewart crowd.—Ed)

#### Clientage

Sir:

This is to say—we greatly prize our *Writer's Year Book* of 1942.

We feel you are doing a great service to all writers, publishers, editors.

Especially creditable is the fact that you classify publishers and their clientage—the editors.

Wishing you continued success.

Canada West Writers,  
GRACE B. WOODS, *Secretary*,  
Silver Heights, Alta.



## Editors Abroad

(Continued from page 13)

more. Applicants are many, and frequently intelligent and personable, but an editor's first year is chiefly devoted to learning how much authority he really has, how much sense his assistants and superiors have, the general traditions of his shop, and who in the field can be relied upon. When you need a man *now*, you can't very well hire a prospect, spend time teaching him his job while your own piles up. Therefore, despite the enormous editorial shortage of man power, not many new editors will be added. The old ones will just get more work.

This places a premium on the writer who can do a good job the first time, without a re-write. Editorial rates to proven professionals started to go up last summer, and right now are past '29 level in all fields except pulp. In the pulps, the half cent a word rate is inching up to \$30 for 5,000 words; while in the cent-a-word pulps, 5,000 words are occasionally bringing \$55 and \$60. The top pulpsters are steady two centers.

While 20% of the magazine and book editors are now gone, more than that percentage left the business of professional free lance writing. The OWI has taken almost every name you can mention, either for full or part time work. The Writer's War Board, a non-pay enterprise, cuts into the time of producing professional authors whose names represent the dime a word chieftains. Thus, in the publishing business, we have the identical situation that exists in every business.

The buyer wants more—the producer has less to supply.

The talented free lancer who has yet to earn a Name is in his land of golden opportunity. The ill wind has blown, and it hath bloweth gold in his path. Editors, with books to fill, and dead lines to meet, and their best producers in the army, are turning more than ever before to the unknown in the sincere hope that he can produce. This is coupled with the sad fact that today, also more than ever, the editor cannot give the beginner letters of advice.

Giants of energy like Daisy Bacon and Rogers Terrill, who made their fame by bringing new writers to the fore, are writing two line letters of rejection. Literary agents whose phone never rang, but to hear a client ask for "a small advance of fifty dollars" are now getting hurry up calls for editorial copy that was "due at the printer's yesterday."

The free lance writer who will work like a dog to master his fundamentals of conflict, characterization, and dialogue is coming into his own.

### Washington Club

Sirs:

We will be happy if you give us space in the WRITER'S DIGEST for the following:

*The Bellingham Writer's Workshop* has twelve members who meet every second Wednesday at the home of one of the group, when we criticize manuscripts. We require that members shall sincerely work at creative writing.

Our group has sold one-act plays, radio script, articles, radio and newspaper columns. Three members have novels in the mails. And we all study the WRITER'S DIGEST. We boast of two former newspaper editors among us and of having as associates, Rose Wilder Lane, Nard Jones, June Frame and June Burn. We are happy to meet anyone who is interested in our line of endeavor.

MABEL RICE WILLIAMS,  
Vice President and Secretary,  
87 Lake Whatcom Blvd.,  
Bellingham, Washington.

### Massachusetts Writer's Club

Sir:

May we use your columns to publicize the *Writers Workshop* that has been formed in Boston?

This group is made up of writers who have a professional viewpoint. Most of us have sold, and a few are still trying to crash the pulps and slicks. Some of our members specialize in short stories, one or two are working on novels, and several write articles only. We all mean business!

Meetings are held two evenings a month, and dues are very nominal. Manuscripts are criticized, suggestions made for revision. We help each other get those editors checks. For further information, write:

FRIEDA E. DAVIS, Secretary,  
114 Strathmore Road,  
Brighton, Mass.

Today 68 writer's clubs are flourishing whose initial announcement appeared in the DIGEST.  
—Ed.

**Hallelujah!**

Sir:

Personnel changes, a definite change of policy, and an increase in word rates prompt me to write this letter.

We have recently added to our staff Mr. William C. Lengel, formerly with *Cosmopolitan* and *Liberty*. His title is supervising editor of the three magazines, *True Confessions*, *Life Story* and *Romantic Story*.

Miss Geraldine Rhoads, formerly managing editor of *The Woman* has replaced Miss Ruth Marrow as editor of *Life Story*. Miss Beatrice Lubitz continues as editor of *True Confessions*, and Miss Erma Lewis continues as editor of *Romantic Story*.

Correspondence regarding stories for these magazines should be addressed to the individual editors. A story submitted to one of these magazines may be considered to have been read with the needs of all three in mind.

The basic rate paid for material in these three magazines is being raised from 2c to 2½c per word. Bonus payments are made for exceptional stories and rates to 5c per word are paid.

The story must be told in the first person and must convince the reader that it is a true story of interesting human experiences. If the story does that, and is of real interest to women, and is not obscene, or objectionable on moral grounds, it will be purchased.

We are not looking for heavily complicated stories and urge that writers do not, in their effort to do without the familiar seduction in confessions, attempt to substitute a too heavily plotted story.

There will be complications as there are in any good story, and it is possible that under our new policy stories will be slightly more com-

plicated as to plot and development than they have been in the past. We urge that these complications stay in the realm of believability and do not go so far as to make the story fictional, or be so involved as to spoil the readability of the story.

Romance and love will continue to be major themes in these magazines and will play a part in every story.

We will continue to use material based on familiar emotional problems. Among these problems are infidelity, incompatibility, money, avarice, jealousy, harmful pride, temptation, etc.

In order that these stories convince the magazine purchaser that they are real narratives, the best stories will continue to come from real life.

Wherever it is consistent with the story, we desire they contain a theme of self-help, or self-improvement, so that the reader may freely profit from the experiences related by the narrator.

We are endeavoring particularly to stress the autobiographical angle in *Life Story*. We want every story in this book to have the characteristics of a "life story." This makes it necessary that the reader is informed somewhat as to the childhood and family background of the narrator.

Generally speaking, we want more interesting things to happen in our stories for the edification and entertainment of our readers than has generally happened in confession stories. We want them to mirror life today—honestly, frankly—but always with good taste. We are looking for a wide variety of backgrounds, and we want these backgrounds to be authentic and to characterize the story itself.

Our editors will be very happy to answer any specific questions that writers may have.

RALPH DAIGH, Editorial Director,  
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CEDARPINES PARK, CALIF.

**Missed One**

My copy of *The Writer's Market* arrived and I am most pleased with its appearance. For thirty years—off and on—I have worked in and out of printeries, editing and publishing this and that, hence the format seemed to me to be a happy idea.

I have one *errata*. Your last paragraph on page 128. It isn't a question of a story being "good enough" which qualifies it for motion picture production. As you know, thousands of splendid stories aren't picture material. But, as one who has had over 500 pictures on the screen I can assure you the advice you give unknown writers to leave Hollywood alone is excellent—*unless they have an agent*. That is the crux of my thought.

*The Turf & Sport Digest* has one of my articles each month and an occasional bit of fiction. You have ignored my pet magazine! Thanking you again and congratulations!

HARRY O. HOYT,  
10572½ Ayres Ave., Los Angeles.

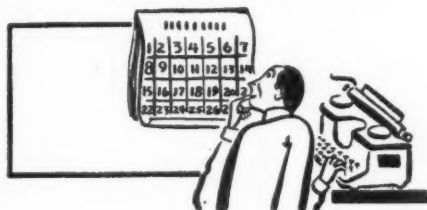
T. & S. D. does appear in "The Writer's Market" (see index) but only as a gag market.

Writer's Digest is your best introduction when writing advertisers.

# AN IDEA A DAY

Monthly Chart for Article Writers

By FRANK A. DICKSON



FOR FEBRUARY

**1. A GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF YOUR STATE.** Slant: The importance of "family trees" in various matters, as in inheritance cases and membership with patriotic societies. The best-known genealogists among the members; searching through old records, as courthouse papers, for data; charges for genealogical research. Studies about the ancestors of present-day dignitaries. MARKET: State newspapers.

**2. GROUND-HOG DAY.** The old, old tradition concerning the ground-hog and his shadow. How our grandparents foretold the weather; old-time weather "signs." MARKET: A local newspaper.

**3. THE "LIFE" OF A CONTROL ENGINEER AT A LOCAL RADIO STATION.** The duties of the "control man." Highly amusing incidents during his career; his favorite programs and also his favorite entertainers on the air; latest improvements in broadcasting equipment. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**4. THE HISTORY OF THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION IN YOUR STATE.** The date of construction and the cost; the architect; the first occupant. Outstanding furnishings. Memorable occasions in the mansion, including banquets. Have Presidents of the United States been entertained there? MARKET: State newspapers.

**5. UNIFORMS OF UNITED STATES SOLDIERS SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE ARMY.** Old uniforms in the possession of residents of your section or on

display in a nearby museum. War stories about their wearers. MARKET: Sectional newspapers.

**6. GAMBLING GAMES THAT WERE IN VOGUE IN THE EARLY DAYS OF YOUR STATE.** Fortunes won or lost by gamblers. Murders in connection with gambling. Gambling games imported from foreign lands. Laws enacted against gambling games. MARKET: State newspapers.

**7. AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN AT THE LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARY.** Slant: How books are carefully selected to meet the needs of the boys and girls, and to stimulate an interest in reading good literature. How the librarian advises the children in reading matter for their particular age. Favorite authors of local boys and girls. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**8. THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF MINIATURE BATTLESHIPS IN YOUR CITY.** How long has the collector followed this hobby? The battleships represented in the collection and details about them. The collector's study of naval architecture. MARKET: A Local newspaper.

**9. LEADING CHICKEN RAISERS OF YOUR CITY.** Slant: How the meat shortage has caused not a few city dwellers to go into chicken raising. Egg production. Local women who are raising poultry on a commercial scale. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**10. SPORTS PLAYED IN YOUR STATE DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR.** Noted athletes of that time, as well as widely known coaches. Slant: The interest of the public in physical education as the means of developing the muscles and preparing students for the rigors of military service. Star players who entered the armed forces. MARKET: State newspapers.

**11. THE BEGINNING OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.** Inject the anniversary angle that the department was created by Act of Congress on February 11, 1889.

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510-M So. Alexandria, Los Angeles, Calif.

Slant: The chief accomplishments of early Secretaries of Agriculture. Scientific research in farm problems at present, as that conducted in your state. MARKET: State newspapers. Don't overlook the farm journals!

**12. GEORGIA DAY.** This marks the 210th anniversary of the landing of General James Oglethorpe at the mouth of the Savannah River. Biographical facts about the founder of the so-called "Cracker State," who was an English general and philanthropist. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**13. THE DEAN OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICERS IN YOUR STATE.** Slant: The remarkable improvements that have developed in the health department of this county since he assumed charge. The main functions of the health office, particularly in war-time; the office's records. The subject's medical training, and his private practice, if any. MARKET: State newspapers.

**14. ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.** The life of St. Valentine, Christian bishop and martyr under the Emperor Claudius. How the practice of sending valentines, a tradition in his honor, was started. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**15. THE SECRETARY OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS.** His, or her, full duties. The subject's experience in educational activities. The part of his work he enjoys the most. How the war has affected local schools; new courses and any teacher shortage. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**16. HOW FAMOUS SOLDIERS OF YOUR STATE HAVE DIED.** Close calls in battles. Did some of the heroes prophesy their death? The soldiers' graves and monuments. MARKET: State newspapers.

**17. COLOR BLINDNESS.** For information, interview a local eye specialist. Difficulties resulting from color blindness. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**18. A VETERAN BASKETBALL COACH OF A COLLEGE IN YOUR STATE.** Championship teams produced by him. Was he once a star on the court? His all-time college basketball squad. Oddities in basketball games. MARKET: State newspapers.

**19. THE HISTORY OF THE PHONOGRAPH.** Thomas A. Edison was issued a patent for the instrument on this day in 1878. Slant: How the advent of the phonograph contributed immeasurably to the advancement of music. Early models of the "talking machine." The manufacture of records. MARKET: A local newspaper. Fashion this into an article for a music publication.

**20. THE NURSES ASSOCIATION OF YOUR STATE.** The members' devotion to the group and to their profession, and their achievements. Objectives of the association; how the body is serving the nation in World War No. 2. The number of members and the officials. MARKET: State newspapers. Let this go to a health publication.

**21. THE TRAINING OF MODELS.** How modeling is taught in a local model school, as explained by an instructor. Qualifications for modeling; the salaries of models; the present demand for models. Models who have achieved success on the stage or in the movies. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**22. GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.** How the "Father of Our Country" was born on February 11, according to the Old Style in the calendar which prevailed in the United States and Great Britain prior to 1752, twenty years after the general's birth. His birth occurred on a Friday; other notables who began life on Friday, considered an unlucky day. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**23. AN INTERVIEW WITH A GAG-WRITER OF YOUR STATE.** The various types of jokes. Old gags that are used over and over, with variations. Publications that have printed the gag-writer's "stuff."

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**24. THE OLDEST SOCIAL CLUBS IN YOUR CITY.** The founders. High-lights of the groups' existence. Social events during previous wars. MARKET: A local newspaper.

**25. EXPERIENCES OF A STATE CHEMIST.** How parts of corpses, as stomachs, are carried to him for analysis. Murder cases which the chemist has helped to solve. Poison cases that attracted widespread attention. The science of toxicology. MARKET: State newspapers. This should fetch a check from a crime magazine.

**26. THE TAXI BUSINESS IN YOUR CITY.** Slant: The war-time demand on the services of taxis. How drivers are schooled in ways of making gas and tires go farther. The owner of the first taxi cab locally; the model of the machine; and the growth of the taxi business in the city. MARKETS A local newspaper.

**27. A SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AT A COLLEGE IN YOUR STATE.** Practical experience afforded the students; student newspapers. The equipment of the school. Graduates who have become prominent writers and editors. The head of the school and his, or her, experience in journalism. MARKET: State newspapers.

**28. THE USE OF RAILROADS DURING THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES.** At the time of the sectional conflict, the United States contained some 30,000 miles of railroads in operation. Description of the locomotives. The destruction of tracks and trains by the enemy. MARKET: A local newspaper. Shoot at a general magazine, or a railroad periodical.

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**Juvenile Market**

Sir:

Thanks for running our letter stating our needs, in your October issue. We received several good scripts as a result of that announcement.

We are now starting a boy's hobby page in our weekly Sunday School paper, "Boy Life," which will use short, practical articles. These should run about 450 to 500 words, suitable and attractive to teen-age boys. In our first hobby page, found in the Dec. 27th issue, which has already gone to press, at this writing, we have a general article on hobbies, written by the editor, and two others, one on stamps and another describing the construction of a wooden, baseball dart game. We plan to run handicraft articles, stamp columns, photographic, chemical, and other varied hobby material.

We are still looking for some good teen-age fellow's stories. And have all the juvenile writers who created sports stories gone off to war? We receive mighty few for consideration. Stories should run from 1800 to 2400 words. They should be "punchier" than usual, and don't be afraid of a struggle, and real drama. Many of the scripts sent in since this editor took over in September aren't stories at all, just mere incidents, written in beautiful, prose style. We work 4 months ahead on stories.

The general type articles will have to be shorter now, as the new hobby page will reduce them to mere fillers. Heretofore they ran up to even a thousand words. Hardly anything over 500 will be usable now, except on rare occasions. Payment for all stuff is from 1/3c to 1/2c a word, with the latter more usually being paid out. Scripts should be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope, and the first page of all stories and articles should include number of words.

WILLIAM FOLPRECHT, EDITOR,  
"Boy Life",  
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**GET THIS LIST of 50 ethical book publishers for 3c stamp.** Charles Carson, Box 5028, Metro Station, Los Angeles.

**S. O. S.—Girl drowning in loneliness.** Please toss a line! Box R-5.

**CARTOONISTS NEEDING IDEAS** write E. Murphy, 3112 North Taylor, St. Louis, Mo.

**SELL THAT SHORT-SHORT—List of 150 markets for 500-2M words.** 50c for current list. 50c for three successive ones. Renewed quarterly. Georgia C. Nichols, Box 247, Venice, Calif.

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**NEED PRINTING? Ask for quotations.** Distinctive work, reasonable prices. Herald Printers, Albany, Wis.

**WRITERS' AIDS, Books, Cards, Novelties, Catalog, Samples 10c.** Easterncity Sales, 330-Sh Wells, Chicago.

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**SUCCESS WITH POETRY (\$2.50).** Shows many poetry pay methods. Send only \$1.25, balance when satisfied with earnings. Other Supreme Texts for Poets. Anton W. Romatka, 25 W. 3rd St., New York.

**LONESOME? Romantic Nationwide Magazine, Photos; 100 Addresses 25c; Year \$1.00.** Morrelle, 130 Noi State, Chicago.

**NORWEGIAN GIRL,** aspiring writer, with a deep love for the sea and the beauties of nature would like to hear from other writers with same interests. Box R-4.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, traveler, 26,** would correspond with woman. Box R-7.

**WANTED collaborator, residing in Chicago area, on timely, finished novel.** State qualifications. Cecil Anderson, 7223 W. 57th Place, Summit, Illinois.

**WRITERS!!!—Stop floundering.** For literary guidance consult Writers Circle, 30 Church, N. Y. City.

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**SENSATIONAL. Thrilling! Mexican-Cuban, art pictures, books, miscellaneous.** Samples, lists, 50c. Jordan, 135-B Brighton St., Boston.

**AM A NEW YORK CAB DRIVER, and would like to correspond with good looking young lady, beginner.** Purpose, partnership or companionship; age 36, 5-5, and I have grammar school education. Box R-11.

**WRITERS! Send for "Titles Are Ideas", list of 300 catchy titles to help sell your stories.** Send \$1 to Literary Service, Dept. R, 1123 1/2 Granville Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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# WRITER'S MARKET



## Quality Magazines

*Free World*, 55 W. 42nd Street, New York City. Louis Dolivet, Editor. Issued monthly; 40c a copy; \$4.00 a year. "We use very little fiction—perhaps one piece in three months—about 2500 words. It must have significant bearing on international affairs. We do use important informational articles on international affairs, 2500 to 3500 words. We buy poetry, but no photographs. Reports are indefinite—approximately one month. Payment is \$30.00 for article of our average length, 3000 words, on publication."

*The Nation*, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Freda Kirchwey, Editor. Issued weekly; 15c a copy; \$5.00 a year. "We use articles on political, social and economic questions of national and international interest, closely tied up with the news. No fiction used. We buy short poems, but no photographs. Reports in one week. Payment is 1½c a word, on publication."

*New Masses*, 461 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Joseph North, Editor. Issued weekly; 15c a copy; \$5.00 a year. "We use 1500-3000-word stories; realistic, progressive stories, mainly about contemporary life, written by careful craftsmen. Also use articles with a strong win-the-war slant on all phases of contemporary life, 1000 to 3000 words. We buy photographs and occasionally poetry. Reports in two weeks. Payment is by arrangement with author."

*The New Republic*, 40 E. 49th Street, New York City. Bruce Bliven, Editor. Issued weekly; 15c a copy; \$5.00 a year. "This is a journal of opinion. We use articles dealing with topics of current interest, 1500 to 2500 words. We buy poetry, but no photographs. Payment is 2c a word."

*Tomorrow Magazine*, 11 E. 44th Street, New York City. Eileen J. Garrett, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$2.50 a year. "We use articles on psychology, creative arts, philosophy, 1500 to 3000 words; articles of the day, particularly with a strong background character. Also

use short stories of unusual literary merit, 1500 to 3000 words. We buy poetry, but no photographs. Reports in two weeks. Payment is made upon acceptance and the article rate is from \$50 upwards."

*The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 1 West Range, Charlottesville, Virginia. Charlotte Kohler, Managing Editor. Issued quarterly; 75c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We use short stories of great merit, 3000-4000 words. Also literary and historical articles and discussions of current topics, 4000-7000 words. We buy a limited amount of excellent verse, but no photographs. Reports in about two weeks. Payment on publication."

## Juvenile Magazines

*Boy Life*, 8th and Cutter Streets, Cincinnati, Ohio. William Folprecht, Editor. Issued weekly; 80c a year. "We use vigorously written, manly stories for teen-age fellows. Good sport stories, adventure, mystery and school desirable. Avoid slang, usual other taboos for younger readers. Stories with good underlying moral wanted. 1800 to 2400 words. We also use 250 to 1000 words of unusual events and things. 'The World's Largest Camera,' 'Money to Burn,' etc. type wanted. Also desire short 500-word hobby articles, photography, chemistry, etc. We do not buy photographs and very little poetry. Reports usually in three days. Payment is ½c to ¼c a word, after acceptance."

*Boys' Life*, 2 Park Avenue, New York City. James E. West, Editor. Issued monthly; 20c a copy; \$2.00 a year. "We use short stories of adventure, Scouting and the out-of-doors, of boys in the war effort, of youth in the Services, 2000-4000 words; serials 4 parts, under 5000 words each. Articles are prepared on order. We do not buy poetry, and the only photographs bought are those suited for covers. Reports in two weeks. Payment is 1½c a word and up, on acceptance."

*Calling All Girls*, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York City. Frances Ullmann, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. For girls



9 to 15. "We use short stories that are written in vivid, informal style. Dramatic, some adventure, some on incidents of everyday life; chief characters, girls in early teens; not longer than 2500 words. We also use articles on subjects of interest to girls 9 to 15, 1200-1500 words. We buy photographs for illustration and timely photos for Girls in the News. Buy poetry from girls only. Reports in about four weeks. Payment is 3c a word, on acceptance."

*Children's Friend*, 425 S. 4th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Rev. John Peterson, Editor. Issued weekly; 50c a year. Sunday-school paper. "We use short stories and some serials of different types, for boys and girls 9 to 12; religious tone preferred; 1600 words for one issue. We also use articles of interest to the above readers, about same length. We buy some photographs, but very little poetry. Reports in four or five days. Payment is \$2.50 to \$3.00 per thousand words, the tenth of month after acceptance.

*The Cradle Roll Home*, 161 Eighth Avenue, North, Nashville, Tennessee. Agnes Kennedy Holmes, Editor. Issued quarterly; 4c a copy; 12c a year. Published by Baptist Sunday School Board. "Most of this material is staff-written."

*Dew Drops*, D. C. Cook Publishing Company, Elgin, Illinois. Natalie Dunning, Editor. Issued weekly. A religious juvenile publication for children 6 to 9 years. "We use stories, 700-900 words. Fairy stories taboo. Also picture stories, games and how-to-make-it features. We use articles containing information or things to do, make or play, 300-600 words. We buy poetry,

## BOOK AUTHORS

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Just placed English rights on *SLEUTHS OF THE SADDLE*, by James Shaffer, another recent sale; this book just published in second serial form also.

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Literary Agent

545 Fifth Avenue New York

but no photographs. Reports in one to three weeks. Payment is 1c a word and up, on acceptance; for articles, 1/2c a word and up, on acceptance."

*Forward*, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Park Hays Miller, Editor. Issued weekly; \$1.00 a year. "We use stories of 3000 words; serials of 6-10 chapters, with installments of 3000 words. Stories may be for either boys or girls, or both, of high school and college age. Adventure and action stories are desired, but not alone for adventure; courage should be actuated by loyalty, purpose, and high ideals of service. Stories must deal with young people, their problems, experiences, and aspirations; home life, vocation, college, etc. We also use travel, nature, biographical, historical, scientific, and general articles of 1000 words, accompanied by photographs. We buy inspirational and nature poems, also photographs. All manuscripts received by fifteenth of month reported on by end of month. Payment is 1/2c a word, on acceptance."

*Junior Scholastic*, 220 E. 42nd Street, New York City. Charles S. Preston, Editor. Issued weekly; 5c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "We use well-written stories about boys or girls between ages of 12 and 15. Stories will be read and studied in English classes, and must be of high quality. We use little original fiction. Length of stories is 800 to 2000 words. Articles are staff-written. We buy photographs, but no poetry. Reports in one month. Payment is \$25 for two-page story, on publication."

*Juniors*, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Elizabeth F. Tibbals, Editor. "This paper is planned for boys and girls 9 to 11 years of age. We welcome well-written short stories (1000 to 2700 words) that are full of action, with good plots appealing to juniors. Serials running not more than eight chapters of from 2000 to 2500 words each are in demand. Illustrated articles, describing with careful detail the process of making things of use to juniors themselves or of interest as gifts, should run from 600 to 1200 words. A limited quantity of poetry and brief educational articles are used. It is important that all materials shall be of a wholesome tone without moralizing and that war themes not be emphasized. Payment is approximately \$4.50 per thousand words, on acceptance."

*The Little Folks*, Hector, Minnesota. Mrs. Edith Cling Palm, Editor. Issued weekly; 35c a year. "We use stories, not over 450 words, for children from 4 to 8 years of age. We also use nature articles, not over 450 words, suitable for small children. We buy poetry not over 20 lines, and occasionally photographs. Reports in one week. Low rates of payment, made quarterly after publication."

*Little Learners*, D. C. Cook Publishing Company, Elgin, Illinois. Natalie Dunning, Editor. Issued weekly. A religious juvenile publication for children 4 to 6 years. "We use stories 600-700 words, also articles of very simple informational type, 200-300 words. Fairy stories taboo. We buy poetry, but no photographs. Reports in one to three weeks. Payment is 1c a word and up for stories, 1/2c a word and up for articles, on acceptance."

*The Open Road for Boys*, 729 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Clayton Holt Ernst, Editor. Issued monthly except January and August; 15c a copy; \$1.50 for 12 issues. "We use exciting, adventurous action stories of sports, school life, Western, mystery, army and navy, aviation, young men and boys in war effort and civilian defense activities, up to 3000 words, with heroes in late teens or older. We also use articles on accomplishments of young men in science and other careers; advances in radio, chemistry, agriculture and business of all kinds; up to 2000 words with illustrations. We do not buy poetry, and only buy photographs to illustrate articles or as picture spread. Reports in two to four weeks. Payment is 1/2c a word and up, on publication or acceptance."

*Our Young People*, 425 S. 4th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Rev. John Peterson, Editor. Issued weekly; 80c a year. "We use stories of interest and value to boys and girls 14 years of age and over, about 1600 words one issue. Religious tone preferred. We buy a few poems and photographs. Reports in four or five days. Payment is \$2.50 to \$3.00 per thousand words, 10th of month after acceptance."

*The Queen's Work*, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri. Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J., Editor. Issued monthly, October to June; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "We use only true stories up to 2000 words. We buy photographs for covers, but no poetry. Reports in two weeks. Payment is 1c a word or better, on acceptance."

*The Story Hour Leader*, 161 Eighth Avenue, North, Nashville, Tennessee. Agnes Kennedy Holmes, Editor. Issued quarterly; 20c a copy; 80c a year. "All material staff-written. No articles solicited."

*Storytime*, 161 Eighth Avenue, North, Nashville, Tennessee. Agnes Kennedy Holmes, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; 40c a year. "This story paper is for children 4 to 8. We use stories not over 700 words. Need some short articles on things children can make, toys, games, house adornment, etc. We buy photographs and poetry. The editor reads manuscripts from 1st to 10th of each month. Payment is 1/2c a word. No manuscripts purchased during July and August."

*Story World*, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadel-

# BOOKS

After a conscientious survey of over a score of publisher's book catalogue, *WRITER'S DIGEST* recommends the following books to its readers. All books selected make interesting reading and are authoritative. All are sold on a money-back guarantee.

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'Teens, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Kenneth L. Wilson, Editor. For boys and girls of high school age. "We want 2000 word stories that interpret Christian ideals to young people. Characters should be both boys and girls in each story, 13 to 19 years old; not boys alone, or girls alone. Love interest is not wanted. Modern backgrounds preferred. Base payment, \$15.00, with bonus for remarkably excellent stories. We use features on science, religion, how-to-make, vocations, hobbies, 850 words with one photograph, for which we pay \$5.00 and up. Our column, 'Boys Who Hit the Mark,' is devoted to boys who have been outstanding in some field such as sports, hobbies, school, part-time jobs, etc. They need not be nationally important, but boys who hit a mark they set for themselves; 450 words with one photograph, for which we pay \$4.00. We are not using picture sequences, poetry, or fillers."

Young People, 1701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Stanley A. Gillet, Editor. An illustrated weekly printed in photogravure. "We use short stories, 2000 to 4000 words; serials 4 to 8 chapters of 2500 to 3500 words. Fiction should have a definite character-building quality. We also use illustrated articles, from 300 to 1500 words. Photographs must be sharp and clear; glossy prints preferred. Payment is according to nature and quality of material, on acceptance."

The Young People, 317 West Broadway, Little Falls, Minnesota. Rev. Emeroy Johnson, Editor. Issued weekly; 80c a year. For young people, 12 to 20. "We use short stories up to 3000 words, preferably not over 2500 words. Subjects may be anything of interest to young people, especially school life, rural life, character building, missions, outdoor life, athletics, etc. War stories are considered on the basis of spiritual and moral value. We should be glad to consider some stories depicting life, problems, impressions, joys, sorrows of families moving from old homes to new defense areas, especially if the story has a good moral slant. We also use

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serials occasionally, up to ten chapters, not over 2500 words in each chapter, preferably less. We use articles up to 1500 words, on nature, hobbies, biography, church activities, camping, photography, etc. We buy some photographs, especially if they illustrate articles, but do not buy poetry. Reports usually in three weeks. Payment is up to \$3.00 per thousand words, after publication."

*The Young People's Standard*, 2923 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri. Margaret R. Cutting, Editor. Issued weekly; 5c a copy; \$1.00 a year. Sunday school paper. "We use short stories, 2000 to 2500 words in length. Also nature, historical, scientific articles, 1000 to 1200 words. We buy photographs and poetry. Reports in about thirty days. Payment is \$2.50 per thousand words, 10c a line for poetry; on acceptance."

**Second-Class Magazines**

*Yankee Magazine*, 34 Foster Street, Newtonville, Massachusetts. Irene Neal Railsback, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We are particularly interested in material having to do with the Yankee scene, not necessarily New England locale, 2000 words. Also uses articles of timely national interest, on various parts of New England. We buy photographs and poetry. Reports in one month. Payment is 1c and 2c a word, on publication."

**Pulp Magazines**

*Clues-Detective Stories*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. John L. Nanovic, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "The market in this magazine is extremely wide. Use novels of 20,000 words; novelettes about 10,000 words; short stories of various lengths. Want good, strong detective action; with or without woman interest; strong emotional appeal if it suits the story; plenty of mystery. No particular slant or taboos—just really good detective stories. Payment is 1c a word and up, on acceptance."

*Complete War Novels*, 330 W. 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We use three novels each issue, 20,000-25,000 words; American heroes only; action on any front, in tanks, planes, or ships. Outline should be submitted before author goes ahead on writing. Reports in ten days. Payment is 1/2c a word and up, on acceptance."

*Doc Savage Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. John L. Nanovic, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy. "We use short stories, 2000 to 4000 words. Modern American adventure, with American hero, either in this country or other country; overcoming big odds to gain his goal. The novel is by arrangement



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Street & Smith's *Mystery Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. John L. Nanovic, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We use a lead novel of 15,000 words; novelettes and short stories of various lengths. Want strong mystery and menace atmosphere, but no sex or sadistic horror tales. Lead can be detective or other hero. Woman interest or not, depending on story. Payment is 1c a word and up, on acceptance."

*The Shadow Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. John L. Nanovic, Editor. Issued semi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use short stories from 2000 to 6000 words. Good, fast action; clever tricks. Hero detective or police officer generally, although any good detective story is acceptable. The novel is by arrangement with author. Payment is 1c a word and up, on acceptance."

*Short Stories*, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. Dorothy McIlwraith, Editor. Issued semi-monthly; 25c a copy; \$5.00 a year. "We use adventure fiction, 3000 words and up. No photographs and very little poetry. Reports in two weeks or more. Payment is 1c a word and up, on publication."

*Variety Love Stories*; 67 W. 44th Street, New York City. Rose Wyn, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use romantic love stories; shorts, 1500 words to 6000 words; novelettes, 7000 to 9000 words. Also use articles up to 1500 words on subjects pertaining to courtship, popularity, charm. We buy light romantic verse, but no photographs. Reports promptly on all material. Payment is 1/2c a word and up, on acceptance."

### Confession Magazines

*Life Confessions*, 1476 Broadway, New York City. Mary Rollins, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We use shorts up to about 5500 words and novelettes about 10,000 words. No photographs and no poetry. Reports

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*Modern Romances*, 149 Madison Avenue, New York City. Hazel L. Berge, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "At present we want emotional stories which are censorproof as far as sex situations are concerned. If war is used as a theme, we prefer to have it built into the story as in the film, 'Mrs. Miniver,' rather than the action war story of spies, sabotage, etc. Stories of defense workers are highly acceptable, but we still want the emotional problem story built around character flaws, frustrations, money difficulties, etc. We use short stories, 5000 to 7500 words; novelettes, 10,000 to 12,000 words; book-lengths, 15,000 to 20,000 words. Stories shorter than 5000 words are also acceptable. No photographs and no poetry. Reports in two to three weeks. Payment is on acceptance, 2c a word straight, with a bonus on book-length material if completed without help from this department."

*Real Story*, 1476 Broadway, New York City. Mary Rollins, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.20 a year. "We use shorts up to about 5500 words and novelettes about 10,000 words. No photographs and no poetry. Reports in about two weeks. Payment is 2c a word, on acceptance."

### Book Publishers

*Book-of-the-Hour Company*, 395 Broadway, New York City. Walter H. Smith, Editor. "We publish pamphlets and books on topics currently of interest. Reports promptly. Writers planning to send in material should first write for information regarding interest in the subject matter. Payment by royalty, periodically."

*The Black Faun Press*, 121 Edgerton Street, Rochester, New York. Romney Winter, Editor. A private press. Publishers of Compass Editions. "We are interested in all types of fiction material so long as such material is of highest quality and does not exceed 40,000 words in length. With the exception of text-books, generally all types of non-fiction are of interest to us; however, it is suggested that a query by mail be made before submitting, to eliminate unsuitable manuscripts. Lengths should not exceed 60,000 words. All types of poetry are welcomed, but material must be of definite quality and not exceeding small book limits. Poetry suitable for pamphlet publication invited. Reports within three weeks. Payment is on a royalty basis, by arrangement with author." This house may do Vanity business—Ed.

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*Rug Profits*, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Eleanor Fox Duff, Editor. Issued monthly. "We use articles on merchandising floor coverings, linoleum, wool and cotton rugs, 800 to 1000 words. We buy photographs for which we pay \$2.50. Payment after publication."

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